

State Plan for the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Plan Supplement for the State Supported Employment Services Program

Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services State Plan for Fiscal Year 2012 (submitted FY 2011)

Preprint - Section 1: State Certifications

1.1 The ***Tennessee Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services*** is authorized to submit this State Plan under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended [1] and its supplement under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act [2].

1.2 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services, the ***Tennessee Department of Human Services Division of Rehabilitation Services*** [3] agrees to operate and administer the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program in accordance with the provisions of this State Plan [4], the Rehabilitation Act, and all applicable regulations [5], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Section 111 of the Rehabilitation Act are used solely for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and the administration of the State Plan for the vocational rehabilitation services program.

1.3 As a condition for the receipt of federal funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act for supported employment services, the designated state agency agrees to operate and administer the State Supported Employment Services Program in accordance with the provisions of the supplement to this State Plan [6], the Rehabilitation Act and all applicable regulations [7], policies and procedures established by the secretary. Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, are used solely for the provision of supported employment services and the administration of the supplement to the Title I State Plan. **Yes**

1.4 The designated state agency and/or the designated state unit has the authority under state law to perform the functions of the state regarding this State Plan and its supplement. **Yes**

1.5 The state legally may carry out each provision of the State Plan and its supplement. **Yes**

1.6 All provisions of the State Plan and its supplement are consistent with state law. **Yes**

1.7 The (enter title of state officer below) **Yes**

Commissioner Department of Human Services

... has the authority under state law to receive, hold and disburse federal funds made available under this State Plan and its supplement.

1.8 The (enter title of state officer below)... **Yes**

Commissioner Department of Human Services

... has the authority to submit this State Plan for vocational rehabilitation services and the State Plan supplement for supported employment services.

1.9 The agency that submits this State Plan and its supplement has adopted or otherwise formally approved the plan and its supplement. **Yes**

State Plan Certified By

As the authorized signatory identified above, I hereby certify that I will sign, date and retain in the files of the designated state agency/designated state unit Section 1 of the Preprint, and separate Certification of Lobbying forms (Form ED-80-0013; available at <http://www.ed.gov/fund/grant/apply/appforms/ed80-013.pdf>) for both the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

Signed? **Yes**

Name of Signatory **RAQUEL HATTER, MSW, Ed.D.**

Title of Signatory **Commissioner Department of Human Services**

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) **07/01/2011**

Assurances Certified By

At the request of RSA, the designated state agency and/or the designated state unit provide the following assurance(s), in addition to those contained within Section 2 through 8 below, in connection with the approval of the State Plan for FY **2012 Yes**

Comments:

Signed? **Yes**

Name of Signatory **RAQUEL HATTER, MSW, Ed.D.**

Title of Signatory **Commissioner Department of Human Services**

Date Signed (mm/dd/yyyy) **07/01/2011**

* The signatory of the assurance with the authority to execute and submit the State Plan will maintain a signed copy of the assurance(s) with the signed State Plan.

Section 1 Footnotes

[1] Public Law 93 112, as amended by Public Laws 93 516, 95 602, 98 221, 99 506, 100-630, 102-569, 103-073, and 105-220.

[2] Unless otherwise stated, "Rehabilitation Act" means the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended.

[3] All references in this plan to "designated state agency" or to "the state agency" relate to the agency identified in this paragraph.

[4] No funds under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved State Plan in accordance with Section 101(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR part 361.

[5] Applicable regulations include the Education Department General Administrative Regulations (EDGAR) in 34 CFR Parts 74, 76, 77, 79, 80, 81, 82, 85 and 86 and the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program regulations in 34 CFR Part 361.

[6] No funds under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act may be awarded without an approved supplement to the Title I State Plan in accordance with Section 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act.

[7] Applicable regulations include the EDGAR citations in footnote 5, 34 CFR Part 361, and 34 CFR Part 363.

Preprint - Section 2: Public Comment on State Plan Policies and Procedures

2.1 Public participation requirements. (Section 101(a)(16)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.10(d), .20(a), (b), (d); and 363.11(g)(9))

(a) Conduct of public meetings.

The designated state agency, prior to the adoption of any substantive policies or procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan, including making any substantive amendments to the policies and procedures, conducts public meetings throughout the state to provide the public, including individuals with disabilities, an opportunity to comment on the policies or procedures.

(b) Notice requirements.

The designated state agency, prior to conducting the public meetings, provides appropriate and sufficient notice throughout the state of the meetings in accordance with state law governing public meetings or, in the absence of state law governing public meetings, procedures developed by the state agency in consultation with the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council.

(c) Special consultation requirements.

The state agency actively consults with the director of the Client Assistance Program, the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council and, as appropriate, Indian tribes, tribal organizations and native Hawaiian organizations on its policies and procedures governing the provision of vocational rehabilitation services under the State Plan and supported employment services under the supplement to the State Plan.

Preprint - Section 3: Submission of the State Plan and its Supplement

3.1 Submission and revisions of the State Plan and its supplement. (Sections 101(a)(1), (23) and 625(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; Section 501 of the Workforce Investment Act; 34 CFR 76.140; 361.10(e), (f), and (g); and 363.10)

(a) The state submits to the commissioner of the Rehabilitation Services Administration the State Plan and its supplement on the same date that the state submits either a State Plan under Section 112 of the Workforce Investment Act of 1998 or a state unified plan under Section 501 of that Rehabilitation Act.

(b) The state submits only those policies, procedures or descriptions required under this State Plan and its supplement that have not been previously submitted to and approved by the commissioner.

(c) The state submits to the commissioner, at such time and in such manner as the commissioner determines to be appropriate, reports containing annual updates of the information relating to the:

1. comprehensive system of personnel development;
2. assessments, estimates, goals and priorities, and reports of progress;
3. innovation and expansion activities; and
4. other updates of information required under Title I, Part B, or Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act that are requested by the commissioner.

(d) The State Plan and its supplement are in effect subject to the submission of modifications the state determines to be necessary or the commissioner requires based on a change in state policy, a change in federal law, including regulations, an interpretation of the Rehabilitation Act by a federal court or the highest court of the state, or a finding by the commissioner of state noncompliance with the requirements of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361 or 34 CFR 363.

3.2 Supported Employment State Plan supplement. (Sections 101(a)(22) and 625(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.34 and 363.10)

(a) The state has an acceptable plan for carrying out Part B, of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act that provides for the use of funds under that part to supplement funds made available under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the cost of services leading to supported employment.

(b) The Supported Employment State Plan, including any needed annual revisions, is submitted as a supplement to the State Plan.

Preprint - Section 4: Administration of the State Plan

4.1 Designated state agency and designated state unit. (Section 101(a)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.13(a) and (b))

(a) Designated state agency.

1. There is a state agency designated as the sole state agency to administer the State Plan or to supervise its administration in a political subdivision of the state by a sole local agency.
2. The designated state agency ***is a state agency that is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and includes a vocational rehabilitation unit as provided in paragraph (b) of this section (Option B was selected/Option A was not selected)***
3. In American Samoa, the designated state agency is the governor.

(b) Designated state unit.

1. If the designated state agency is not primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities, in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(B) of this section, the state agency includes a vocational rehabilitation bureau, division or unit that:
 - A. is primarily concerned with vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities and is responsible for the administration of the designated state agency's vocational rehabilitation program under the State Plan;
 - B. has a full-time director;
 - C. has a staff, at least 90 percent of whom are employed full-time on the rehabilitation work of the organizational unit; and
 - D. is located at an organizational level and has an organizational status within the designated state agency comparable to that of other major organizational units of the designated state agency.
2. The name of the designated state vocational rehabilitation unit is

Division of Rehabilitation Services

4.2 State independent commission or State Rehabilitation Council. (Sections 101(a)(21) and 105 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.16 and .17)

The State Plan must contain one of the following assurances.

- (a) The designated state agency is an independent state commission that

1. is responsible under state law for operating or overseeing the operation of the vocational rehabilitation program in the state and is primarily concerned with the vocational rehabilitation or vocational and other rehabilitation of individuals with disabilities in accordance with subparagraph 4.1(a)(2)(A) of this section.
2. is consumer controlled by persons who:
 - A. are individuals with physical or mental impairments that substantially limit major life activities; and
 - B. represent individuals with a broad range of disabilities, unless the designated state unit under the direction of the commission is the state agency for individuals who are blind;
3. includes family members, advocates or other representatives of individuals with mental impairments; and
4. undertakes the functions set forth in Section 105(c)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(h)(4).

(b) The state has established a State Rehabilitation Council that meets the criteria set forth in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.17

(c) If the designated state unit has a State Rehabilitation Council, Attachment 4.2(c) provides a summary of the input provided by the council consistent with the provisions identified in subparagraph (b)(3) of this section; the response of the designated state unit to the input and recommendations; and, explanations for the rejection of any input or any recommendation.

(Option B was selected)

4.3 Consultations regarding the administration of the State Plan. (Section 101(a)(16)(B) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.21)

The designated state agency takes into account, in connection with matters of general policy arising in the administration of the plan and its supplement, the views of:

(a) individuals and groups of individuals who are recipients of vocational rehabilitation services or, as appropriate, the individuals' representatives;

(b) personnel working in programs that provide vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;

(c) providers of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities;

(d) the director of the Client Assistance Program; and

(e) the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.

4.4 Nonfederal share. (Sections 7(14) and 101(a)(3) of the Rehabilitation

Act; 34 CFR 80.24 and 361.60)

The nonfederal share of the cost of carrying out this State Plan is 21.3 percent and is provided through the financial participation by the state or, if the state elects, by the state and local agencies.

4.5 Local administration. (Sections 7(24) and 101(a)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47) and .15)

The State Plan provides for the administration of the plan by a local agency. **No**

If "Yes", the designated state agency:

(a) ensures that each local agency is under the supervision of the designated state unit with the sole local agency, as that term is defined in Section 7(24) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(47), responsible for the administration of the vocational rehabilitation program within the political subdivision that it serves; and

(b) develops methods that each local agency will use to administer the vocational rehabilitation program in accordance with the State Plan.

4.6 Shared funding and administration of joint programs. (Section 101(a)(2)(A)(ii) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.27)

The State Plan provides for the state agency to share funding and administrative responsibility with another state agency or local public agency to carry out a joint program to provide services to individuals with disabilities. **No**

If "Yes", the designated state agency submits to the commissioner for approval a plan that describes its shared funding and administrative arrangement. The plan must include:

(a) a description of the nature and scope of the joint program;

(b) the services to be provided under the joint program;

(c) the respective roles of each participating agency in the administration and provision of services; and

(d) the share of the costs to be assumed by each agency.

4.7 Statewideness and waivers of statewideness. (Section 101(a)(4) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.25, .26, and .60(b)(3)(i) and (ii))

X This agency **is** requesting a waiver of statewideness.

(a) Services provided under the State Plan are available in all political subdivisions of the state.

(b) The state unit may provide services in one or more political subdivisions of the state that increase services or expand the scope of services that are available statewide under this State Plan if the:

1. nonfederal share of the cost of these services is met from funds provided by a local public agency, including funds contributed to a local public agency by a private agency, organization or individual;
2. services are likely to promote the vocational rehabilitation of substantially larger numbers of individuals with disabilities or of individuals with disabilities with particular types of impairments; and
3. state, for purposes other than the establishment of a community rehabilitation program or the construction of a particular facility for community rehabilitation program purposes, requests in Attachment 4.7(b) (3) a waiver of the statewideness requirement in accordance with the following requirements:
 - A. identification of the types of services to be provided;
 - B. written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the state unit the nonfederal share of funds;
 - C. written assurance that state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect; and
 - D. written assurance that all other State Plan requirements, including a state's order of selection, will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

(c) Contributions, consistent with the requirements of 34 CFR 361.60(b)(3)(ii), by private entities of earmarked funds for particular geographic areas within the state may be used as part of the nonfederal share without the state requesting a waiver of the statewideness requirement provided that the state notifies the commissioner that it cannot provide the full nonfederal share without using the earmarked funds.

4.8 Cooperation, collaboration and coordination. (Sections 101(a)(11), (24) (B), and 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.22, .23, .24, and .31, and 363.11(e))

(a) Cooperative agreements with other components of statewide work force investment system.

The designated state agency or the designated state unit has cooperative agreements with other entities that are components of the statewide work force investment system and replicates those agreements at the local level between individual offices of the designated state unit and local entities carrying out the One-Stop service delivery system or other activities through the statewide work force investment system.

(b) Cooperation and coordination with other agencies and entities.

Attachment 4.8(b) (1)-(4) describes the designated state agency's:

1. cooperation with and use of the services and facilities of the federal, state, and local agencies and programs, including programs carried out by the undersecretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture and state use contracting programs, to the extent that those agencies and programs are not carrying out activities through the statewide work force investment system;
2. coordination, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 4.8(c) of this section, with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services;
3. establishment of cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers, in accordance with the requirements of paragraph 5.10(b) of the State Plan; and,
4. efforts to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and entities with respect to the provision of supported employment and extended services for individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with the requirements of subsection 6.5 of the supplement to this State Plan.

(c) Coordination with education officials.

1. Attachment 4.8(b)(2) describes the plans, policies and procedures for coordination between the designated state agency and education officials responsible for the public education of students with disabilities that are designed to facilitate the transition of the students who are individuals with disabilities from the receipt of educational services in school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services under the responsibility of the designated state agency.
2. The State Plan description must:
 - A. provide for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment in accordance with 34 CFR 361.45 as early as possible during the transition planning process but, at the latest, before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting; and
 - B. include information on a formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency that, at a minimum, provides for:
 - i. consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to postschool activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
 - ii. transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and the

educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under Section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act;

- iii. roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
- iv. procedures for outreach to students with disabilities as early as possible during the transition planning process and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

(d) Coordination with statewide independent living council and independent living centers.

The designated state unit, the Statewide Independent Living Council established under Section 705 of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364, and the independent living centers described in Part C of Title VII of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 366 have developed working relationships and coordinate their activities.

(e) Cooperative agreement with recipients of grants for services to American Indians.

- 1. There is in the state a recipient(s) of a grant under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of vocational rehabilitation services for American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing on or near federal and state reservations. **No**
- 2. If "Yes", the designated state agency has entered into a formal cooperative agreement that meets the following requirements with each grant recipient in the state that receives funds under Part C of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act:
 - A. strategies for interagency referral and information sharing that will assist in eligibility determinations and the development of individualized plans for employment;
 - B. procedures for ensuring that American Indians who are individuals with disabilities and are living near a reservation or tribal service area are provided vocational rehabilitation services; and
 - C. provisions for sharing resources in cooperative studies and assessments, joint training activities, and other collaborative activities designed to improve the provision of services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities.

4.9 Methods of administration. (Section 101(a)(6) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.12, .19 and .51(a) and (b))

(a) In general.

The state agency employs methods of administration, including procedures to

ensure accurate data collection and financial accountability, found by the commissioner to be necessary for the proper and efficient administration of the plan and for carrying out all the functions for which the state is responsible under the plan and 34 CFR 361.

(b) Employment of individuals with disabilities.

The designated state agency and entities carrying out community rehabilitation programs in the state, who are in receipt of assistance under Part B, of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and this State Plan, take affirmative action to employ and advance in employment qualified individuals with disabilities covered under and on the same terms and conditions as set forth in Section 503 of the Rehabilitation Act.

(c) Facilities.

Any facility used in connection with the delivery of services assisted under this State Plan meets program accessibility requirements consistent with the provisions, as applicable, of the Architectural Barriers Rehabilitation Act of 1968, Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 and the regulations implementing these laws.

4.10 Comprehensive system of personnel development. (Section 101(a)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.18)

Attachment 4.10 describes the designated state agency's procedures and activities to establish and maintain a comprehensive system of personnel development designed to ensure an adequate supply of qualified state rehabilitation professional and paraprofessional personnel for the designated state unit. The description includes the following:

(a) Data system on personnel and personnel development.

Development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs and personnel development with respect to:

1. Qualified personnel needs.
 - A. The number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
 - B. The number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
 - C. Projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in five years based on projections of the number of

individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

2. Personnel development.

- A. A list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- B. The number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- C. The number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

(b) Plan for recruitment, preparation and retention of qualified personnel.

Development, updating on an annual basis, and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel based on the data collection and analysis system described in paragraph (a) of this subsection and that provides for the coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare and retain personnel who are qualified in accordance with paragraph (c) of this subsection, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

(c) Personnel standards.

Policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are appropriately and adequately prepared and trained, including:

- 1. standards that are consistent with any national- or state-approved or recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services.
- 2. To the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the state plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, the institutions of higher education identified in subparagraph (a)(2), and other public agencies of these steps and the time lines for taking each step.

3. The written plan required by subparagraph (c)(2) describes the following:
- A. specific strategies for retraining, recruiting and hiring personnel;
 - B. the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards required by subparagraph (c)(1);
 - C. procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period; and
 - D. the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards and the identification of a plan for training such individuals to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

(d) Staff development.

Policies, procedures and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training. The narrative describes the following:

- 1. A system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement and rehabilitation technology.
- 2. Procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

(e) Personnel to address individual communication needs.

Availability of personnel within the designated state unit or obtaining the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

(f) Coordination of personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

Procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

4.11. Statewide assessment; annual estimates; annual state goals and priorities; strategies; and progress reports.

(Sections 101(a)(15), 105(c)(2) and 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR

361.17(h)(2), .29, and 363.11(b))

(a) Comprehensive statewide assessment.

1. Attachment 4.11(a) documents the results of a comprehensive, statewide assessment, jointly conducted every three years by the designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council (if the state has such a council). The assessment describes:
 - A. the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:
 - i. individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
 - ii. individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program carried out under this State Plan; and
 - iii. individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide work force investment system.
 - B. The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.
2. For any year in which the state updates the assessments, the designated state unit submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding updates to the assessments.

(b) Annual estimates.

Attachment 4.11(b) identifies on an annual basis state estimates of the:

1. number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services under the plan;
2. number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds provided under Part B of Title I of the Rehabilitation Act and under Part B of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection in accordance with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of this State Plan, estimates of the number of individuals to be served under each priority category within the order; and
3. costs of the services described in subparagraph (b)(1), including, if the designated state agency uses an order of selection, the service costs for each priority category within the order.

(c) Goals and priorities.

1. Attachment 4.11(c)(1) identifies the goals and priorities of the state that

are jointly developed or revised, as applicable, with and agreed to by the State Rehabilitation Council, if the agency has a council, in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.

2. The designated state agency submits to the commissioner a report containing information regarding any revisions in the goals and priorities for any year the state revises the goals and priorities.
3. Order of selection.
If the state agency implements an order of selection, consistent with subparagraph 5.3(b)(2) of the State Plan, Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - B. provides a justification for the order; and
 - C. identifies the service and outcome goals, and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
4. Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds.
Attachment 4.11(c)(4) specifies, consistent with subsection 6.4 of the State Plan supplement, the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for the provision of supported employment services.

(d) Strategies.

1. Attachment 4.11(d) describes the strategies, including:
 - A. the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities, including how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to those individuals at each stage of the rehabilitation process and how those services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis;
 - B. outreach procedures to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities in accordance with subsection 6.6 of the State Plan supplement, and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program;
 - C. as applicable, the plan of the state for establishing, developing or improving community rehabilitation programs;
 - D. strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
 - E. strategies for assisting other components of the statewide work force

investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

2. Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the designated state agency uses these strategies to:
 - A. address the needs identified in the assessment conducted under paragraph 4.11(a) and achieve the goals and priorities identified in the State Plan attachments under paragraph 4.11(c);
 - B. support the innovation and expansion activities identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) of the plan; and
 - C. overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the State Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and State Supported Employment Services Program.

(e) Evaluation and reports of progress.

1. The designated state unit and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state unit has a council, jointly submits to the commissioner an annual report on the results of an evaluation of the effectiveness of the vocational rehabilitation program and the progress made in improving the effectiveness of the program from the previous year.
2. Attachment 4.11(e)(2):
 - A. provides an evaluation of the extent to which the goals identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3) were achieved;
 - B. identifies the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals and priorities;
 - C. describes the factors that impeded their achievement, to the extent they were not achieved;
 - D. assesses the performance of the state on the standards and indicators established pursuant to Section 106 of the Rehabilitation Act; and
 - E. provides a report consistent with paragraph 4.12(c) of the plan on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion activities were utilized in the preceding year.

4.12 Innovation and expansion. (Section 101(a)(18) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.35)

(a) The designated state agency reserves and uses a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for the:

1. development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with

disabilities under this State Plan, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of the statewide assessment identified in Attachment 4.11(a) and goals and priorities of the state identified in Attachments 4.11(c)(1) and, if applicable, Attachment 4.11(c)(3); and

2. support of the funding for the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 105(d)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.17(i), and the funding of the Statewide Independent Living Council, consistent with the resource plan prepared under Section 705(e)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 364.21(i).

(b) Attachment 4.11 (d) describes how the reserved funds identified in subparagraph 4.12(a)(1) and (2) will be utilized.

(c) Attachment 4.11(e)(2) describes how the reserved funds were utilized in the preceding year.

4.13 Reports. (Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.40)

(a) The designated state unit submits reports in the form and level of detail and at the time required by the commissioner regarding applicants for and eligible individuals receiving services under the State Plan.

(b) Information submitted in the reports provides a complete count, unless sampling techniques are used, of the applicants and eligible individuals in a manner that permits the greatest possible cross-classification of data and protects the confidentiality of the identity of each individual.

Preprint - Section 5: Administration of the Provision of Vocational Rehabilitation Services

5.1 Information and referral services. (Sections 101(a)(5)(D) and (20) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.37)

The designated state agency has implemented an information and referral system that is adequate to ensure that individuals with disabilities, including individuals who do not meet the agency's order of selection criteria for receiving vocational rehabilitation services if the agency is operating on an order of selection, are provided accurate vocational rehabilitation information and guidance, including counseling and referral for job placement, using appropriate modes of communication, to assist such individuals in preparing for, securing, retaining or regaining employment, and are referred to other appropriate federal and state programs, including other components of the statewide work force investment system in the state.

5.2 Residency. (Section 101(a)(12) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.42(c)(1))

The designated state unit imposes no duration of residence requirement as part of determining an individual's eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services or that excludes from services under the plan any individual who is present in the state.

5.3 Ability to serve all eligible individuals; order of selection for services. (Sections 12(d) and 101(a)(5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.36)

(a) The designated state unit is able to provide the full range of services listed in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, as appropriate, to all eligible individuals with disabilities in the state who apply for services. No

(b) If No:

1. Individuals with the most significant disabilities, in accordance with criteria established by the state, are selected first for vocational rehabilitation services before other individuals with disabilities.
2. Attachment 4.11(c)(3):
 - A. shows the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services;
 - B. provides a justification for the order of selection; and
 - C. identifies the state's service and outcome goals and the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.

3. Eligible individuals who do not meet the order of selection criteria have access to the services provided through the designated state unit's information and referral system established under Section 101(a)(20) of the Rehabilitation Act, 34 CFR 361.37, and subsection 5.1 of this State Plan.

5.4 Availability of comparable services and benefits. (Sections 101(a)(8) and 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.53)

(a) Prior to providing any vocational rehabilitation services, except those services identified in paragraph (b), to an eligible individual or to members of the individual's family, the state unit determines whether comparable services and benefits exist under any other program and whether those services and benefits are available to the individual.

(b) The following services are exempt from a determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits:

1. assessment for determining eligibility and vocational rehabilitation needs by qualified personnel, including, if appropriate, an assessment by personnel skilled in rehabilitation technology;
2. counseling and guidance, including information and support services to assist an individual in exercising informed choice consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act;
3. referral and other services to secure needed services from other agencies, including other components of the statewide work force investment system, through agreements developed under Section 101(a)(11) of the Rehabilitation Act, if such services are not available under this State Plan;
4. job-related services, including job search and placement assistance, job retention services, follow-up services, and follow-along services;
5. rehabilitation technology, including telecommunications, sensory and other technological aids and devices; and
6. post-employment services consisting of the services listed under subparagraphs (1) through (5) of this paragraph.

(c) The requirements of paragraph (a) of this section do not apply if the determination of the availability of comparable services and benefits under any other program would interrupt or delay:

1. progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the individualized plan for employment;
2. an immediate job placement; or
3. provision of vocational rehabilitation services to any individual who is determined to be at extreme medical risk, based on medical evidence provided by an appropriate qualified medical professional.

(d) The governor in consultation with the designated state vocational rehabilitation agency and other appropriate agencies ensures that an interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination that meets the requirements of Section 101(a)(8)(B)(i)-(iv) of the Rehabilitation Act takes effect between the designated state unit and any appropriate public entity, including the state Medicaid program, a public institution of higher education, and a component of the statewide work force investment system to ensure the provision of the vocational rehabilitation services identified in Section 103(a) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.48, other than the services identified in paragraph (b) of this section, that are included in the individualized plan for employment of an eligible individual, including the provision of those vocational rehabilitation services during the pendency of any dispute that may arise in the implementation of the interagency agreement or other mechanism for interagency coordination.

5.5 Individualized plan for employment. (Section 101(a)(9) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.45 and .46)

(a) An individualized plan for employment meeting the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and implemented in a timely manner for each individual determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services, except if the state has implemented an order of selection, and is developed and implemented for each individual to whom the designated state unit is able to provide vocational rehabilitation services.

(b) Services to an eligible individual are provided in accordance with the provisions of the individualized plan for employment.

5.6 Opportunity to make informed choices regarding the selection of services and providers. (Sections 101(a)(19) and 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.52)

Applicants and eligible individuals or, as appropriate, their representatives are provided information and support services to assist in exercising informed choice throughout the rehabilitation process, consistent with the provisions of Section 102(d) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.52.

5.7 Services to American Indians. (Section 101(a)(13) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.30)

The designated state unit provides vocational rehabilitation services to American Indians who are individuals with disabilities residing in the state to the same extent as the designated state agency provides such services to other significant populations of individuals with disabilities residing in the state.

5.8 Annual review of individuals in extended employment or other employment under special certificate provisions of the fair labor standards act of 1938. (Section 101(a)(14) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.55)

(a) The designated state unit conducts an annual review and reevaluation of the status of each individual with a disability served under this State Plan:

1. who has achieved an employment outcome in which the individual is

compensated in accordance with Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act (29 U.S.C. 214(c)); or

2. whose record of services is closed while the individual is in extended employment on the basis that the individual is unable to achieve an employment outcome in an integrated setting or that the individual made an informed choice to remain in extended employment.

(b) The designated state unit carries out the annual review and reevaluation for two years after the individual's record of services is closed (and thereafter if requested by the individual or, if appropriate, the individual's representative) to determine the interests, priorities and needs of the individual with respect to competitive employment or training for competitive employment.

(c) The designated state unit makes maximum efforts, including the identification and provision of vocational rehabilitation services, reasonable accommodations and other necessary support services, to assist the individuals described in paragraph (a) in engaging in competitive employment.

(d) The individual with a disability or, if appropriate, the individual's representative has input into the review and reevaluation and, through signed acknowledgement, attests that the review and reevaluation have been conducted.

5.9 Use of Title I funds for construction of facilities. (Sections 101(a)(17) and 103(b)(2)(A) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.49(a)(1), .61 and .62(b))

If the state elects to construct, under special circumstances, facilities for community rehabilitation programs, the following requirements are met:

(a) The federal share of the cost of construction for facilities for a fiscal year does not exceed an amount equal to 10 percent of the state's allotment under Section 110 of the Rehabilitation Act for that fiscal year.

(b) The provisions of Section 306 of the Rehabilitation Act that were in effect prior to the enactment of the Rehabilitation Act Amendments of 1998 apply to such construction.

(c) There is compliance with the requirements in 34 CFR 361.62(b) that ensure the use of the construction authority will not reduce the efforts of the designated state agency in providing other vocational rehabilitation services other than the establishment of facilities for community rehabilitation programs.

5.10 Contracts and cooperative agreements. (Section 101(a)(24) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.31 and .32)

(a) Contracts with for-profit organizations.

The designated state agency has the authority to enter into contracts with for-profit organizations for the purpose of providing, as vocational rehabilitation services, on-the-job training and related programs for individuals with disabilities under Part A of Title VI of the Rehabilitation Act, upon the determination by the

designated state agency that for-profit organizations are better qualified to provide vocational rehabilitation services than nonprofit agencies and organizations.

(b) Cooperative agreements with private nonprofit organizations.

Attachment 4.8(b)(3) describes the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private nonprofit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

Preprint - Section 6: Program Administration

Section 6: Program Administration

6.1 Designated state agency. (Section 625(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(a))

The designated state agency for vocational rehabilitation services identified in paragraph 1.2 of the Title I State Plan is the state agency designated to administer the State Supported Employment Services Program authorized under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.2 Statewide assessment of supported employment services needs. (Section 625(b)(2) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(b))

Attachment 4.11(a) describes the results of the comprehensive, statewide needs assessment conducted under Section 101(a)(15)(a)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and subparagraph 4.11(a)(1) of the Title I State Plan with respect to the rehabilitation needs of individuals with most significant disabilities and their need for supported employment services, including needs related to coordination.

6.3 Quality, scope and extent of supported employment services. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(c) and .50(b)(2))

Attachment 6.3 describes the quality, scope and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive supported employment services. The description also addresses the timing of the transition to extended services to be provided by relevant state agencies, private nonprofit organizations or other sources following the cessation of supported employment service provided by the designated state agency.

6.4 Goals and plans for distribution of Title VI, Part B, funds. (Section 625(b)(3) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(d) and .20)

Attachment 4.11(c)(4) identifies the state's goals and plans with respect to the distribution of funds received under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act.

6.5 Evidence of collaboration with respect to supported employment services and extended services. (Sections 625(b)(4) and (5) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(e))

Attachment 4.8(b)(4) describes the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities to assist in the provision of supported employment services and other public or nonprofit agencies or organizations within the state, employers, natural supports, and other entities with respect to the provision of extended services.

6.6 Minority outreach. (34 CFR 363.11(f))

Attachment 4.11(d) includes a description of the designated state agency's outreach procedures for identifying and serving individuals with the most significant disabilities who are minorities.

6.7 Reports. (Sections 625(b)(8) and 626 of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(h) and .52)

The designated state agency submits reports in such form and in accordance with such procedures as the commissioner may require and collects the information required by Section 101(a)(10) of the Rehabilitation Act separately for individuals receiving supported employment services under Part B, of Title VI and individuals receiving supported employment services under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 7: Financial Administration

7.1 Five percent limitation on administrative costs. (Section 625(b)(7) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.11(g)(8))

The designated state agency expends no more than five percent of the state's allotment under Section 622 of the Rehabilitation Act for administrative costs in carrying out the State Supported Employment Services Program.

7.2 Use of funds in providing services. (Sections 623 and 625(b)(6)(A) and (D) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 363.6(c)(2)(iv), .11(g)(1) and (4))

(a) Funds made available under Title VI, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act are used by the designated state agency only to provide supported employment services to individuals with the most significant disabilities who are eligible to receive such services.

(b) Funds provided under Title VI, Part B, are used only to supplement and not supplant the funds provided under Title I, Part B, of the Rehabilitation Act, in providing supported employment services specified in the individualized plan for employment.

(c) Funds provided under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act are not used to provide extended services to individuals who are eligible under Part B of Title VI or Title I of the Rehabilitation Act.

Preprint - Section 8: Provision of Supported Employment Services

8.1 Scope of supported employment services. (Sections 7(36) and 625(b)(6)(F) and (G) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54), 363.11(g)(6) and (7))

(a) Supported employment services are those services as defined in Section 7(36) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.5(b)(54).

(b) To the extent job skills training is provided, the training is provided on-site.

(c) Supported employment services include placement in an integrated setting for the maximum number of hours possible based on the unique strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests and informed choice of individuals with the most significant disabilities.

8.2 Comprehensive assessments of individuals with significant disabilities. (Sections 7(2)(B) and 625(b)(6)(B); 34 CFR 361.5(b)(6)(ii) and 363.11(g)(2))

The comprehensive assessment of individuals with significant disabilities conducted under Section 102(b)(1) of the Rehabilitation Act and funded under Title I of the Rehabilitation Act includes consideration of supported employment as an appropriate employment outcome.

8.3 Individualized plan for employment. (Sections 102(b)(3)(F) and 625(b)(6)(C) and (E) of the Rehabilitation Act; 34 CFR 361.46(b) and 363.11(g)(3) and (5))

(a) An individualized plan for employment that meets the requirements of Section 102(b) of the Rehabilitation Act and 34 CFR 361.45 and .46 is developed and updated using funds under Title I.

(b) The individualized plan for employment:

1. specifies the supported employment services to be provided;
2. describes the expected extended services needed; and
3. identifies the source of extended services, including natural supports, or, to the extent that it is not possible to identify the source of extended services at the time the individualized plan for employment plan is developed, a statement describing the basis for concluding that there is a reasonable expectation that sources will become available.

(c) Services provided under an individualized plan for employment are coordinated with services provided under other individualized plans established under other federal or state programs.

Attachment 4.2(c) Input of State Rehabilitation Council

Required annually by all agencies except those agencies that are independent consumer-controlled commissions.

Identify the Input provided by the state rehabilitation council, including recommendations from the council's annual report, the review and analysis of consumer satisfaction, and other council reports. Be sure to also include:

- the Designated state unit's response to the input and recommendations; and
- explanations for the designated state unit's rejection of any input or recommendation of the council.

[\[OLE_LINK4\]](#) The State Rehabilitation Council (SRC) is established in Section 105 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended (Act), and 34 CFR §361.16.17 of its implementing regulations. The SRC gives advice to and works in partnership with the Division of Rehabilitation Services (referred to as "the Division" throughout this report) including input on the state plan. The following represent the comments and input of the State Rehabilitation Council with respect to the 2011 state plan. Some of the comments may be viewed as criticisms and/or concerns while others are complimentary. The SRC generally believes many good things are happening with Vocational Rehabilitation in [\[OLE_LINK3\]](#)Tennessee. However, there is much room for improvement if the Division is going to better enable citizens with disabilities to maximize their potential.

1. The SRC requests the Division provide the reports listed in 34 CFR Section 361.16(a)(2)(IV). We understand this includes:

The designated state unit transmits to the Council –

- (A) All plans, reports, and other information required under this part to be submitted to the Secretary;
- (B) All policies and information on all practices and procedures of general applicability provided to or used by rehabilitation personnel providing vocational rehabilitation services under this part; and
- (C) Copies of due process hearing decisions issued under this part and transmitted in a manner to ensure that the identity of the participants in the hearings is kept confidential;

- RSA Monitoring Report
- Triennial Needs Assessment – pursuant to 34 C.F.R. §361.29;
- Consumer Satisfaction Report – (all versions – including broken down by Region);
- SF-269
- RSA-2
- RSA-113
- RSA-509
- RSA-722 & copies of Due Process Initial Orders for the last fiscal year (with names redacted)
- All other reports submitted to RSA during the last fiscal year.

The SRC requests the Division provide these reports to SRC members to be reviewed a minimum of 30 days prior to report due dates to allow SRC input/feedback. This should be a standard practice of the Division to submit all reports to the SRC in this timely manner as to allow the SRC to comply with the federal regulation cited above.

RESPONSE:

Reports required to be submitted to RSA are publically available on the RSA-MIS website [[ahref="http://rsa.ed.gov/index.cfm">http://rsa.ed.gov/index.cfm\[/a\]](http://rsa.ed.gov/index.cfm)]. The Division has 30 days from the end of the reporting period to submit reports, to gather all of the data, complete reports and submit them to RSA. The Triennial Needs Assessment and Consumer Satisfaction Report has been shared with the SRC in the past and the Division will continue to share this information. The division will work with the SRC to develop a method for sharing due process hearing decisions.

2. The SRC has received reports from the Division over the past year of promotions and other personnel movement The SRC has requested to review the budget to determine the amount of funding spent on direct client services. The SRC has concerns that not enough of the budget is being

allocated to client services. The SRC recommends that all available funding be directed to direct client services prior to adding and/or upgrading administrative/executive level positions.

RESPONSE:

The Division agrees the primary focus of spending should be on services leading to the employment of our clients. Such spending includes direct client service spending; Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers (both Smyrna and community centers); and staff focused on evaluations, employment, and counseling and guidance.

The Division intends to provide a financial/budget presentation at the next meeting of the SRC at their request.

3. The SRC has an ongoing concern about the declining number of people with disabilities being placed into employment. The SRC has been tracking trends of fewer cases being successfully closed each year.

In 2010, the Division successfully closed only 1651 cases, which is a decline of approximately 50% over the last 5 years. During that same time period, expenditures increased significantly. The SRC recognizes that the economy plays a factor as does the Order of Selection. The SRC has two recommendations for the Division. First, keeping all categories open would ensure adequate active cases in the pipeline, which will increase successful closures. Second, the SRC recommends that the Division implement a grade card system for job placement vendors in order to examine the vendor's success rate. The SRC believes that the implementation of this grade card system will provide ample information to the Division about its job placement vendors, which in turn will provide the Division with the information needed to implement changes to insure successful closures.

RESPONSE:

In regards to suggestion #1, the Division is committed to serving as many individuals as its funds and resources will allow. The Division monitors services

and expenditures on a continuous basis, allowing the Division to manage available funds to assure sustainability of services for cases placed in an open priority category and receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The Division does not anticipate its resources for FY 2012 will be adequate to serve all individuals who apply for services. The Division anticipates it will be able to continue regular releases from the waiting list in order to build the number of cases in the pipeline.

In regards to suggestion #2, the Division agrees the monitoring of providers leads to greater success and allows for the appropriate revisions to the system. The Division currently has a regular monitoring process in place which includes monthly reporting from vendors. This process will be enhanced by the implementation of our new case management system to be completed by September 30, 2012.

4. The SRC feels that by law it should be more involved in the development of the actual state plan rather than just signing off on it. Section 4.11 (c) (1) states that the goals and priorities are to be developed and agreed to by the SRC. This did not occur. The SRC and the Division should work during the coming year to ensure that the SRC has the resources to participate more fully in the state plan.

RESPONSE:

The Division solicits feedback and input from the SRC throughout the year at each quarterly SRC meeting and uses this feedback when developing the state plan. The Division will continue to make a concerted effort to request input at each SRC meeting. The June meeting of SRC is also intended for final input and dialogue on the draft state plan. Recognizing this, the Division is open to a proposal from the SRC on how they would like to increase their involvement in the plan process.

5. To further enhance the congressional mandate for the SRC to assist and participate in setting goals and priorities with the Division, the SRC looks forward to conducting annual focus groups and having input to the needs assessment. The SRC recommends that the SRC works collaboratively with the Division to develop and have input into the instrument that will be used on the next needs assessment.

RESPONSE:

The Division solicits feedback and input from the SRC throughout the year and includes this feedback and input from discussions at quarterly SRC meetings when developing the needs assessment. The Division will continue to make a concerted effort to request specific input at each SRC meeting.

6. The SRC understands the Division has an interagency agreement with the Department of Education to provide services to transition aged students with disabilities to assist them in making the transition from school to work. However, the SRC has concerns that the process of developing the students IPE to transition students from school to work may need to be refined. The SRC strongly recommends that the Division implement a procedure to develop a student's IPE shortly after priority category placement to provide career exploration and job placement services while the student is still in high school. The SRC encourages the Division to increase the number of transition to work counselors that would be available to eligible students.

RESPONSE:

Career exploration is an integral part of the IPE development process. Career exploration can continue throughout the DIVISION-student relationship and can be identified on the plan for employment along with job placement. The DIVISION Policy Manual Section 11.3 states the plan for employment must be developed and approved before the student leaves the school setting and must be developed as early as possible during the transition planning process. The Division's services cannot interfere with the student's secondary education activities nor result in the student exiting the school system prematurely. Services to prepare students for the world of work, such as personal and vocational adjustment training can be provided under a plan for employment prior to the student leaving the school system. For those students who will not pursue post-secondary training, job placement services can begin just prior to the student exiting the school system.

Currently, the Division has 26 counselors providing focused transition services through third-party agreements with school systems across the state. There are approximately 92 counselors providing transition services to the remaining schools that are not under third-party agreements.

7. The SRC encourages the Division to revise its procedures manual that contains information indicating that SSI/SSDI recipients should contribute to the cost of their VR services. The federal regulation 34 CFR§361.54(b)(3)(ii) provides a provision of SSI/SSDI beneficiaries will not participate financially in their vocational rehabilitation services. The SRC recommends that the Division revise its policy manual and procedures to mirror this federal regulation.

RESPONSE:

The Vocational Rehabilitation Policy Manual was clarified in November 2008 to assure that SSI/SSDI benefits would not be used to meet any cost of the client's rehabilitation program. Our staff was trained in early 2009 regarding SSI/SSDI and comparable benefits. SPD 14 - Client Participation in the Cost of Services was issued 10/1/2009. Staff have been trained on SSI/SSDI and our procedures are clear and consistent with the federal regulations.

8. According to the VR policy manual, the IPE is to be developed as soon as possible after eligibility determination but no later than six months from the eligibility date determination. With this in mind, the SRC encourages the Division to return to the previous IPE format that only required identification of the funding sources of services rather than precise dollar amounts of funding required for services. The new IPE format creates excessive delays in the completion of the IPE.

RESPONSE:

The implementation of the Division's electronic case management system, TRIMS, will provide a plan for employment format that is consistent with federal regulations. After full implementation of TRIMS, we should realize efficiencies in plan implementation.

9. The SRC has serious concerns in regards to the delays in the past two years in our receipt of the draft State Plan. The delay in receiving the State Plan has not allowed the members of the SRC adequate time to provide the required input to the Division on the State Plan. Additionally, the public has not been given ample time to review the draft State Plan prior to the public hearings. This delay in delivery of the draft State Plan to the SRC members and the public compromises our ability to adequately comment on the State Plan. The SRC strongly recommends and expects the Division to submit the draft of the state plan to SRC members one week prior to the April SRC meeting each year. This procedure will enable both the SRC and the Division to submit the draft plan to the public to insure they have ample time to review the state plan and prepare their comments.

RESPONSE:

The Division strives to post the state plan on the DHS website as early as possible and prior to public hearings.

10. We commend the Division for recently implementing more frequent periodic releases of individuals from the waiting list in Priority Category 2. The SRC also commends the Division for setting a goal of permanently opening Priority Category 02 by the end of Fiscal Year 2012 as stated in the state plan draft. However, the SRC believes this goal is one of the Division's top priorities and encourages the Division to reach this goal earlier and revise the goal date stated

in the plan to reflect this change.

RESPONSE:

The Division is committed to serving as many individuals as its funds and resources will allow. The Division monitors services and expenditures on a continuous basis, allowing the Division to manage available funds to assure sustainability of services for cases placed in an open priority category and receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). The Division will continue regular releases from the waiting list and/or open additional Priority Categories as resources allow and in line with its Order of Selection outlined in this plan.

11. The SRC commends the Division for developing career exploration materials to assist clients in determining their employment goals and providing informed choice. However, it has come to our attention that this process is not 100% effective. We also understand that not every VR client has this opportunity. The SRC encourages the Division to adopt a consistent, comprehensive plan for career exploration with training to be provided to staff across the State. The SRC also encourages the Division to implement career exploration with individuals on employment tracks other than students destined for vocational school and college.

RESPONSE:

The Division agrees that career exploration is an important tool and step in the rehabilitation process for many of our clients. This service is provided in many forms (vocational evaluations, career counseling with staff or vendors, and career exploration tools via staff or vendors) to a wide range of clients.

The Division welcomes the opportunity to discuss the information referenced here with the SRC and suggests it be placed on the agenda for an upcoming SRC meeting.

12. The SRC is aware that the Division is participating in meetings with the Client Assistance Program on a regular basis to address issues and concerns of VR clients. The SRC views this collaboration as a positive effort for Tennesseans with disabilities seeking employment through VR services. The SRC appreciates the two agencies

working together in a proactive manner for the benefit of applicants and clients of the VR program.

RESPONSE:

The Division values the working relationship with the Client Assistance Program (CAP) and will continue to meet and dialogue with CAP.

13. The SRC plans to do Focus Groups to further enhance the information gathered for the triennial needs assessment. The SRC, in good faith, collaborated with the Division to revise the questions to be asked during the Focus Groups. The public was aware that the SRC was conducting Focus Groups. Along with the SRC, the public learned, at the State Plan Public Hearings, that the Focus Groups were indefinitely postponed. During the public hearings, the SRC received comments from the public asking when the Focus Groups would be held. Thus, the SRC would like to request approval to conduct the originally scheduled Focus Groups between now and December 31, 2011.

RESPONSE:

The Division will work with the SRC to clarify the process to approve requests such as focus groups.

14. The SRC has requested, for the past two years, the Division to present the content of the State Plan in a format other than the PowerPoint Presentation. While the SRC recognizes that using the PowerPoint design, the presentation should include information from the State Plan. If the Division continues with the trend of using PowerPoint Presentation to conduct the public hearings, the SRC recommends the Division have substantive information highlighting the changes made each year in the State Plan.

RESPONSE:

The Division will review the content present at the state plan public hearings and make changes as necessary to provide substantive information to the public.

15. The SRC strongly encourages the Division to schedule Public Hearings across the State to be held over a two week period at the end of May annually. Further, the SRC requests that the Public Hearings be held at accessible, neutral sites, such as Independent Living Centers or University settings. The SRC implores the Division to better publicize the Public Hearings through the use of mainstream media and the Division's distribution mechanisms concurrently with the public notice posting on the Division's website. The SRC highly recommends the distribution of the public notice 90 days prior to the Public Hearings. The SRC recommends that a member of the Division's central office staff attend each Public Hearing and be available to answer basic questions about the Plan in order for the public to make comments.

RESPONSE:

Public hearings are generally held the last week of May and the first week of June. Neutral sites are used when available and all sites are assessable. The Division welcomes input from the SRC on ways to better publicize the public hearings. Regional supervisors are available at each public hearing and central office leaders were present at some of the public hearings.

This screen was last updated on Jul 1 2011 11:21AM by satnoliverg

Attachment 4.7(b)(3) Request for Waiver of Statewideness

This agency **has** requested a waiver of statewideness.

Identify the types of services to be provided by the program for which the waiver of statewideness is requested.

The waiver request should also include:

- a written assurance from the local public agency that it will make available to the designated state unit the non-federal share of funds;
- a written assurance that designated state unit approval will be obtained for each proposed service before it is put into effect;
- a written assurance that all state plan requirements will apply to all services approved under the waiver.

The Division requests a waiver of statewideness in order to maintain twenty-two Third Party Agreements with other units of government, primarily local education agencies (LEAs). These Third Party Agreements are designed to provide enhanced and concentrated services to Transition School to Work students/clients covered by the agreements. The Division has a contract with each entity that is consistent with Federal regulations (34 CFR § 361.26) and includes the following provisions:

(a) The vocational rehabilitation services to be provided are identified in Section A. Scope of Services in each contract (Each contract has been submitted separately to RSA to provide the written assurances requested for this attachment);

(b) The LEA assures that non-Federal funds are made available to the Division by committing to their maintenance of effort in Section E.13 of the contract;

(c) The LEA assures that the Division's approval is required before services are provided with the Division's counselor determining eligibility for each client served; and

(d) The LEA assures, through the Division's vocational rehabilitation counselors, that all other state plan requirements, including the Order of Selection policy, are applied to persons receiving services through the agreement.

While the Division provides transition services to all LEAs throughout the state, these transition contracts enable the provision of an expanded and more intense transition service to students/clients resulting from the inclusion of job coaches, case manager assistants, and clerical staff that would not otherwise be available to work with the vocational rehabilitation clients. These contracts enable the Division to have a greater presence within the schools and act as a stronger resource to the LEAs in the provision of transition services.

A list of the LEA contracts is provided below.

Anderson County Schools

Bledsoe County Schools

Blount County Schools

Carter County Schools and Johnson County Schools

Clarksville Montgomery County Schools

Cocke County Schools

Elizabethton City Schools

Greene County Schools and Greeneville City Schools

Hamblen County Schools

Henderson County Schools

Humboldt City Schools, Trenton Special School District, Milan Special School District

Jackson-Madison County Schools

Knox County Schools

McMinn County Schools

McNairy County Schools and Hardeman County Schools

Memphis City Schools

Putnam County Schools

Robertson County School

Sequatchie County Schools

Sevier County Schools

Union County Schools

Washington County Schools

This screen was last updated on Jul 1 2011 11:21AM by satnoliverg

Attachment 4.8(b)(1) Cooperative Agreements with Agencies Not Carrying Out Activities Under the Statewide Workforce Investment System

Describe interagency cooperation with and utilization of the services and facilities of agencies and programs that are not carrying out activities through the statewide workforce investment system with respect to

- Federal, state, and local agencies and programs;
- if applicable, Programs carried out by the Under Secretary for Rural Development of the United States Department of Agriculture; and
- if applicable, state use contracting programs.

The Division has interagency cooperation, collaboration, and coordination with other entities that are not components of the Statewide Workforce Investment System.

The Division works in cooperation with:

The Department of Children's Services in serving youth with significant disabilities;

The Department of Health in providing services to individuals with traumatic brain injury (TBI);

Post-secondary school systems in the provision of services to individuals with physical and mental disabilities;

The Department of Corrections in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities being released from state correctional facilities;

Local city police, county sheriffs and judges programs in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities being released from jails or on probation or trial diversion;

The Division of Adult and Family Services (Department of Human Services) in the provision of services for individuals with significant disabilities participating in services under the Temporary Assistance for Needy Families program;

The Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to mental illness, developmental disabilities, and alcohol and drug abuse;

The Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (Department of Finance and Administration) in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to intellectual disabilities; and

University of Tennessee, Center for Disability and Employment, to market to businesses the services provided by the Division and to recruit businesses to hire the Division's clients.

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Attachment 4.8(b)(2) Coordination with Education Officials

- Describe the designated state unit's plans, policies, and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities from school to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services, including provisions for the development and approval of an individualized plan for employment before each student determined to be eligible for vocational rehabilitation services leaves the school setting or, if the designated state unit is operating on an order of selection, before each eligible student able to be served under the order leaves the school setting.
- Provide information on the formal interagency agreement with the state educational agency with respect to
 - consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including VR services;
 - transition planning by personnel of the designated state agency and educational agency that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs;
 - roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services;
 - procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services maintains an ongoing interagency agreement with the Tennessee Department of Education, Tennessee Department of Children's Services, Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Bureau of TennCare, Division of Intellectual Disability Services, Tennessee Department of Health and the Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities and Tennessee Department of Corrections. The agreement, along with the Division's policy manual and Standard Procedures Directives, outlines the plans, policies and procedures for coordination with education officials to facilitate the transition of students with disabilities to the receipt of vocational rehabilitation services.

When a student who is IDEA eligible reaches the age of fourteen (14), the Individualized Education Program Team (IEP Team), as defined by 34 CFR § 300.344, formulates an Individualized Transition Plan (ITP) as a component of the IEP that will assess the transition service needs of the student. The Division's staff is invited and to the extent possible participates in these IEP meetings.

The Division has been under an Order of Selection since 2001. Under the Order, the Division is only able to provide direct services to those eligible individuals who are most significantly disabled, but the Division must provide information and referral services to help all applicants find services through other agencies and entities.

If the IEP Team determines that the student should be referred for vocational

rehabilitation services, the student must be present at the IEP Team meeting when the referral is made. The Division's staff is to be available to inform the student and parents of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, the application procedures, the eligibility requirements including the Order of Selection, and the potential scope of services that may be available. When appropriate, the Division takes an application from the student and determines eligibility as well as whether the student is in an open priority category. If the student is in an open priority category, the Division's staff assists in the formulation of IEP/ITPs while in school and a vocational rehabilitation individualized plan for employment (IPE) when the student begins to focus on exiting the school system.

The agencies involved in the interagency agreement cooperate in developing and coordinating services for youth with disabilities within each respective agency's legal authority. The ultimate goal of each agency participating in the agreement is to provide, or cause to be provided, a continuum of appropriate services leading to transition from school into employment. The agreement provides for:

1. Consultation and technical assistance to assist educational agencies in planning for the transition of students with disabilities from school to post-school activities, including vocational rehabilitation services;
2. Transition planning by personnel of the Division of Rehabilitation Services and the educational agency for students with disabilities that facilitates the development and completion of their individualized education programs under section 614(d) of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004 (P.L. 108-446);
3. The roles and responsibilities, including financial responsibilities, of each agency, including provisions for determining state lead agencies and qualified personnel responsible for transition services; and
4. Procedures for outreach to and identification of students with disabilities who need transition services.

A vocational rehabilitation (VR) counselor is assigned to work with each local education agency (LEA) for the purposes of referrals and the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to eligible students. VR counselors provide technical assistance to school personnel (LEAs) to help them identify appropriate referrals for vocational rehabilitation services. The counselor also provides information and referral to students not eligible for vocational rehabilitation services.

It is the Division's policy that the development and approval of the individualized plan for employment (IPE) occur by the time each student determined eligible for VR services leaves the school setting. The process for that is outlined above.

The interagency agreement identifies the financial responsibility of the Department of Education (DOE) to ensure that individuals who are IDEA eligible receive free appropriate public education (FAPE) in the least restrictive environment. Free appropriate public education (FAPE) means regular and special

education and related services which:

- (a) Are provided at public expense, under public supervision and direction, and without charge to the parent;
- (b) Meet the standards established by state law, including the requirements of IDEA Part B and the Rules, Regulations and Minimum Standards for the Governance of Tennessee Public Schools, issued by DOE;
- (c) Include preschool, elementary school, and secondary school (including appropriate vocational, career or work experience education); and
- (d) Are provided in conformity with an individualized education program (IEP). 34 CFR § 300.13.

The interagency agreement relates the financial responsibility of the Division to ensure that individuals who are IDEA eligible and also meet the Division's eligibility requirements will receive Vocational Rehabilitation Services. Vocational Rehabilitation Services means any services necessary to determine eligibility and those services described in an individualized plan for employment (IPE) necessary to assist an individual with a disability in preparing for, securing, retaining, or regaining an employment outcome that is consistent with the strengths, resources, priorities, concerns, abilities, capabilities, interests, and informed choice of the individual.

The LEA is responsible for the educational costs related to the provision of special education and related services for the individual attending school. The agreement relates that if another public agency is obligated under federal or state law or assigned responsibility under state policy to provide or pay for any services that are considered special education or related services and are necessary for ensuring FAPE to students who are IDEA eligible, the public agency shall fulfill that obligation or responsibility, directly, through contract or by another arrangement. However, failure of that public agency to pay for that service does not relieve the LEA of its obligation to provide that service to an individual with a disability in a timely manner.

The Division is responsible for all costs necessary for eligibility determination and provision of services under an individualized plan for employment (IPE). The Division must take into account comparable services and benefits [34 CFR § 361.53 (c)(1)], available under any other program that does not interrupt or delay the progress of the individual toward achieving the employment outcome identified in the IPE.

The Division's staff maintains a working relationship with special education supervisors, vocational education supervisors, directors, secondary school guidance counselors, and LEA administrators for the purpose of providing outreach for students with disabilities and technical assistance to school personnel to assist the LEAs to prepare students with disabilities for career opportunities. The Division participates in in-service training programs for the LEAs, as well as in statewide special education conferences for the purpose of providing information regarding vocational rehabilitation services. The Division

also participates in and organizes local community job fairs, job clubs, attends civic club/organization meetings to inform students and parents of the purpose of the vocational rehabilitation program, the application procedures, the eligibility requirements, and the potential scope of services that may be available.

Other identification activities include completion of student health survey forms coordinated with guidance counselors or general education teachers to identify students with physical or emotional disabilities that do not meet the criteria for special education services (commonly referred to as Section 504 students).

The Division has a dedicated full-time state office position to serve as transition coordinator. This position serves as liaison with the State Department of Education and other partners in the interagency agreement to provide technical assistance and training related to vocational rehabilitation services. This position works with VR counselors and supervisory staff to improve access and services for students with disabilities. This position identifies, arranges for, or provides training to the Division's counselors, educators, students with disabilities, and families in a variety of areas related to transition services.

The Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division) contracts with Local Educational Agencies (LEAs) as part of its transition initiative. The contracts provide for the Local Educational Agencies (school districts) to employ case manager assistants, job coaches and/or secretaries to work under the administrative supervision of the LEA. All services provided under these contracts/agreements have a vocational rehabilitation focus. All services provided under these contracts/agreements are in keeping with all state plan requirements to include our state's Order of Selection requirements. Services provided under these contracts/agreements are only available to applicants for, or recipients of, services of the Division of Rehabilitation Services.

Although the Division utilizes contracts with LEAs as part of its transition initiative, all decisions affecting eligibility for vocational rehabilitation services, the nature and scope of available services, and the provision of these services remain the sole responsibility of the vocational rehabilitation counselor employed by the Division. VR staff is responsible for the determination to close cases and for all allocation of expenditures for services.

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Attachment 4.8(b)(3) Cooperative Agreements with Private Nonprofit Organizations

Describe the manner in which the designated state agency establishes cooperative agreements with private non-profit vocational rehabilitation service providers.

The Division is utilizing community rehabilitation programs throughout the state as follows:

1. The Division's Facility Program:

A. The Tennessee Rehabilitation Center (Center) at Smyrna is a state operated comprehensive residential rehabilitation facility that serves individuals with significant disabilities. The facility is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in programs of comprehensive vocational evaluation services, employee development services, and employment skills training services. The Center offers the following program and support services:

Program Services

- Comprehensive vocational evaluation and mobile evaluation services
- Job objectives and behavioral services, a pre-vocational work adjustment training program
- Occupational skills training in automotive maintenance/detailing, building maintenance and grounds keeping, business education, commercial cleaning, food service, and warehouse training
- Physical rehabilitation services to include: occupational, physical and recreational therapy; rehabilitation nursing services, personal care attendant training and adaptive equipment assessments. Outpatient services are also provided in occupational and physical therapy services and adaptive equipment assessments.
- Traumatic brain injury services to include: occupational, physical, cognitive, and speech/language therapy; vocational evaluation; behavioral instruction, job readiness instruction and community re-entry training.
- Transitional life skills training to include: managing self-care and daily living skills; home management skills and practices; financial management skills and practices; transportation; health maintenance; comparative shopping; meal preparation; and civil rights and advocacy.
- Vision impairment services to include: pre-vocational assessment and training for independent living; college preparation services; assistive technology assessments and training; computer training; self employment evaluation and instruction; GED preparation; and prerequisite training for entry into Tennessee

Business Enterprises.

Support Services

- Residential living
- Client health services
- Case management services
- Drivers education
- Psychiatric and physician services
- Recreation therapy and leisure-time skills
- Remedial education
- Job seeking skills training
- Psychological services
- Independent living skills training

The Center operates at a program capacity of 160 individuals and provides services to approximately 1,200 Tennesseans with significant disabilities each year.

The Center is a member of the National Consortium of State Operated Comprehensive Rehabilitation Centers. An Advisory Council is utilized to provide valuable feedback used in guiding decision making in Center operations and program development. In addition, the Center conducts exit customer satisfaction surveys on individuals completing services, from each program of service provided, completes support services customer satisfaction surveys twice a year with clients receiving services, and conducts client family surveys, as well as a referring counselor needs assessment and satisfaction survey on an annual basis. Feedback obtained from these survey instruments is also used in guiding decisions about current and future support services and program services operations, as well as accessibility and physical plant operations.

B. A network of 17 Tennessee Rehabilitation Centers (TRCs) is located across the state providing day services to eligible individuals with significant disabilities, seeking competitive employment. All community TRC facilities are accredited by the Commission of Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) in programs of comprehensive vocational evaluation and employee development services. The TRCs are supported by a combination of appropriated local and Federal funds.

Program Services

Vocational Evaluation

Comprehensive vocational evaluation services provide an individualized, timely

and systematic process for identifying viable vocational options and developing employment goals and objectives.

An accredited comprehensive vocational evaluation service uses the following techniques to examine a wide range of employment alternatives:

- Assessment of functional/occupational performance in real or simulated environments
- Psychometric testing
- Preference and interest inventories
- Personality testing
- Extensive personal interviews
- Other appropriate evaluation tests depending on the individual
- Analysis of prior work experience and transferable skills

Employment Services

Services are based upon individual needs and can include comprehensive employment services or any individual component.

- Employee development services and/or job readiness instruction
- Community employment services (job development and placement)

Employee Development Services include:

- Work skills development through a facility workshop: including the use of contract work, job readiness assessment and training.
- Job readiness assessment and instruction includes: interview skills instruction, completing a job application, developing a resume, grooming and hygiene for the work place, self determination training, developing and using job-finding networks and resources.

Community Employment Services include:

- Job readiness assessment and instruction
- Job development and placement into competitive employment through the identification of employment opportunities in the local job market
- Development of realistic employment goals
- Establishment of service plans to achieve employment outcomes
- Identification of resources to achieve and maintain employment.

- Coordination of and referral to employment related services.

TRC facilities conduct exit customer satisfaction surveys on individuals completing services from each program of service provided, completes a yearly survey with clients receiving services, referring counselors, contract providers, funding sources, employers, and other identified stakeholders. Feedback obtained from the surveys is used to improve program services.

2. Service Contracts:

A. The Division plans to continue service contracts with the following community rehabilitation programs to ensure quality services statewide provided funding is available:

- Caring, Inc.
- Clovernook
- Deaf Centers: Knoxville Area Community Center for the Deaf; Jackson Center for Independent Living; Frontier Health: Interpreting Service for the Deaf; Partnership for Families, Children and Adults, League for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing
- Department of Education
- Goodwill of Memphis
- National Federation for the Blind
- Park Center
- Technology Centers: East Tennessee Technology Access in Knoxville; Signal Centers; Technology Access Center of Middle Tennessee in Nashville; West Tennessee Special Technology Access Resource (STAR) Center in Jackson; and Mid South ACT in Memphis
- The ARC of the Mid-South
- University of Memphis Training and Technical Assistance Project
- University of Tennessee Center on Disability and Employment
- Vanderbilt University Project Opportunity
- Vanderbilt University Return to Work Program

B. The Division has two service contracts with community rehabilitation programs (Clovernook and Volunteer Blind Industries, Inc.) serving visually impaired clients in the areas of evaluation, adjustment, activities of daily living, orientation and mobility, training, job development and employment.

3. Letters of Understanding

A. The Division has encouraged the establishment and development of CRPs to improve and expand services. The Letter of Understanding (LOU) is an agreement between the Division and the CRP and in cooperation with the Department of Finance and Administration. The LOUs describe the functions and responsibilities of the Division and the CRP as well as the scope of services and payment methodology agreed upon by both the Division and CRP in a joint effort of improving and expanding employment opportunities for individuals with disabilities.

B. The Division has 49 general LOUs with service providers throughout the state. The Division also has 92 supported employment LOUs; 93 job placement LOUs, and 58 LOUs for trial work experiences.

Items one (1) through three (3) above are used to provide needed services such as but not limited to:

- Vocational evaluation
- Personal and work adjustment
- Transportation
- Vocational training
- Job readiness training
- Job development
- Job coaching
- Job placement
- Supported employment
- Rehabilitation technology
- Orientation and mobility
- Activities of daily living
- Trial work experiences
- Follow-up and follow along services

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Attachment 4.8(b)(4) Arrangements and Cooperative Agreements for the Provision of Supported Employment Services

Describe the efforts of the designated state agency to identify and make arrangements, including entering into cooperative agreements, with other state agencies and other appropriate entities in order to provide the following services to individuals with the most significant disabilities:

- supported employment services; and
- extended services.

The Division has interagency arrangements and coordination with other entities for the provision of supported employment services and extended services.

These include:

The Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services (Department of Finance and Administration) in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to intellectual disabilities;

Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities in the provision of services for individuals with significant disabilities due to mental and/or physical impairments that began during the early developmental years;

The Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities in the provision of services to individuals with significant disabilities due to mental illness, developmental disabilities, and alcohol and drug abuse;

The Tennessee Employment Consortium, an independent association of community rehabilitation providers and state agencies developed jointly by the Division, the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services, and the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities to provide a forum for all stake holders to review and discuss state policies and share best practices; and

University of Tennessee, Center for Disability and Employment, contract for supported employment consultants to assist community rehabilitation providers in the provision of supported employment services and staff training and development.

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Attachment 4.10 Comprehensive System of Personnel Development

Data System on Personnel and Personnel Development

1. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on qualified personnel needs with respect to:

- the number of personnel who are employed by the state agency in the provision of vocational rehabilitation services in relation to the number of individuals served, broken down by personnel category;
- the number of personnel currently needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services, broken down by personnel category; and
- projections of the number of personnel, broken down by personnel category, who will be needed by the state agency to provide vocational rehabilitation services in the state in 5 years based on projections of the number of individuals to be served, including individuals with significant disabilities, the number of personnel expected to retire or leave the field, and other relevant factors.

The Division received 8,393 new applications for services in Fiscal Year 2010 and provided services to 29,748 individuals.

The Division currently experiences an overall staff attrition rate of approximately ten percent (10%). Based on a total of 26 vacancies for the past year, the attrition rate for counselor level positions is slightly higher at 12%. Of the Division's 639 positions, 103 state employees (16%) are within 5 years of meeting requirements for full retirement benefits (based on 30 years of service). The Division's staffing level remains adequate to meet the demand for services in the upcoming fiscal year.

Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years
ADMIN ASSISTANT 1	2		10%
ADMIN SECRETARY	7		10%
ADMIN SERVICES ASSISTANT 2*	2		10%
ADMIN SERVICES ASSISTANT 5	1		10%
BLIND SERVICES REHAB CTR MGR	1		10%

BUILDING MAINTENANCE WORKER 2	5	1	10%
BUILDING MAINTENANCE WORKER 3	1		10%
BUSINESS ENT CONSULTANT 2*	5	1	10%
BUSINESS ENT SPECIALIST	7		10%
BUSINESS ENT SUPERVISOR	3		10%
CLERK 2	1		10%
CUSTODIAL WORKER 2	6	1	10%
CUSTODIAL WORKER SUPV 1	1		10%
DHS PROGRAM COORDINATOR	15	2	10%
DHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR 1	5		10%
DHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR 2	4		10%
DHS PROGRAM DIRECTOR 3	3		10%
DHS PROGRAM MANAGER	5		10%
DHS PROGRAM SPECIALIST	7	2	10%
DHS PROGRAM SUPERVISOR	9	1	10%
FACILITIES MANAGER 1	1		10%
FIELD SUPERVISOR 1	32	1	10%
FIELD SUPERVISOR 2	4		10%
HEARING IMPAIRED DIRECTOR	1		10%
INFO RESOURCE SUPPORT SPEC 5	1		10%
LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSE 2*	9	2	

Row	Job Title	Total positions	Current vacancies	Projected vacancies over the next 5 years

1		0	0	0
2		0	0	0
3		0	0	0
4		0	0	0
5		0	0	0
6		0	0	0
7		0	0	0
8		0	0	0
9		0	0	0
10		0	0	0

2. Describe the development and maintenance of a system for collecting and analyzing on an annual basis data on personnel development with respect to:

- a list of the institutions of higher education in the state that are preparing vocational rehabilitation professionals, by type of program;
- the number of students enrolled at each of those institutions, broken down by type of program; and
- the number of students who graduated during the prior year from each of those institutions with certification or licensure, or with the credentials for certification or licensure, broken down by the personnel category for which they have received, or have the credentials to receive, certification or licensure.

[aname="OLE_LINK6">[/a][aname="OLE_LINK5">In Tennessee, there are two universities that have Council on Rehabilitation Education (CORE) certified programs providing a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. One is in the eastern part of the state at the University of Tennessee at Knoxville; and the other is at the University of Memphis located in the western part of the state.

The University of Tennessee Knoxville (UTK) has an on-campus program with a current enrollment of 8 students. Additionally, 15 individuals are enrolled in UTKs distance learning program of which 7 students are employees of the Division. Of the 23 currently enrolled, 3 students (13%) have disabilities and 7 students (30%) represent minority backgrounds. For the federal fiscal year (10/09 - 9/10), 17 students graduated from the on-campus program. All graduates met the academic criteria to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam.

The University of Memphis currently has 26 graduate students in their on-campus

program. None (0%) of these students are employed by the Division. Of the 26 on-campus students, 5 have a disability (19%) and 11 represent a minority group (42%). For the federal fiscal year (10/09 - 9/10), 9 students graduated from the on-campus program. All graduates met the academic criteria to sit for the Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC) exam and two (22%) successfully obtained their CRC credential. [/a]

Row	Institutions	Students enrolled	Employees sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates sponsored by agency and/or RSA	Graduates from the previous year
1	University of Memphis	26	16	5	9
2	University of TN – Knoxville	23	14	16	17
3		0	0	0	0
4		0	0	0	0
5		0	0	0	0

Plan for Recruitment, Preparation and Retention of Qualified Personnel

Describe the development (updated on an annual basis) and implementation of a plan to address the current and projected needs for qualified personnel including, the Coordination and facilitation of efforts between the designated state unit and institutions of higher education and professional associations to recruit, prepare, and retain personnel who are qualified, including personnel from minority backgrounds and personnel who are individuals with disabilities.

The Divisions in-state training staff continues to meet quarterly with the program administrators at the University of Tennessee and the University of Memphis for the purpose of planning and sharing information relative to personnel development activities. These meetings provide the mechanism for gathering information on an annual basis relative to the number of students enrolled in their respective rehabilitation counselor education programs, as well as the number who graduated from their programs during the past year.

To advance recruitment activities, the Division has dedicated a program specialist position in the staff development unit. This program specialist is actively seeking out other masters level programs across the nation; primarily those with RSA funded slots, to increase the number of incumbent staff in

masters programs. Other duties of the program specialist include developing/distributing recruiting brochures at job fairs, speaking to graduate level programs to promote state employment in the rehabilitation field and encouraging incumbent staff to take advantage of graduate level training opportunities in rehabilitation counseling distance learning programs. The Division recognizes that recruitment activities are also the responsibility of counseling, supervisory and management level staff across the state with these personnel involved in recruitment activities in their regional and local communities. To enhance recruitment activities, the Division is actively working with its Human Resources Department to explore ways to expand and/or streamline employment opportunities. The Division has begun to provide paid internships to graduate students enrolled in a graduate rehabilitation counseling program of study. Additionally, the Division is working to implement a Graduate Associate program whereby individuals successfully completing a paid or unpaid internship can enter state employment through this special job classification.

The Division continues its recruitment policy for staff from minority backgrounds and for staff who are individuals with disabilities. Along with the dedicated program specialist, supervisors and counselors continue their recruitment efforts from historically black colleges and universities as well as institutions of higher education noted for a high student population of individuals with disabilities. Supervisors and counselors continue to visit high schools and participate in job fairs in an effort to acquaint students with the rehabilitation counselor education programs, especially the programs at the University of Tennessee and the University of Memphis.

Counselors continue to counsel and encourage clients who are interested in pursuing post secondary training, especially clients from minority backgrounds, to consider vocational rehabilitation counseling as a profession. The Division's director of staff development and the program specialist continue to work closely with university rehabilitation counselor education program administrators to stress the need for their recruitment of applicants from minority backgrounds and individuals with disabilities into their training programs.

Currently incentives for incumbent staff to participate in a masters degree program include financial assistance with tuition, books, fees, and minimal educational leave. Funding for a pay incentive based upon successful completion of a masters degree program was approved in January 2005 for graduates and has been requested and approved for each successive graduate.

The Division expects to retain qualified rehabilitation professionals who are on the staff by providing support services which will make their jobs easier. Counselors have computer capability and receive training in a variety of programs, including Internet utilization, to access rehabilitation materials. Numerous films, books and other printed materials are available to all offices within the Division. Counselors are encouraged to request copies of any materials of a professional nature which would assist them in their jobs.

The Division is continuing to explore additional ways to enhance retention of qualified staff. Letters of appreciation are sent by the Assistant Commissioner to employees who have exhibited exemplary performance or excelled in certain

areas (e.g., receiving CRC credential and/or excelled in casework performance). Exemplary counselors are also given priority in attending various out-service training events in recognition of their hard work, dedication and commitment to assisting individuals with disabilities in becoming employed.

Personnel Standards

Describe the state agency's policies and procedures for the establishment and maintenance of personnel standards to ensure that designated state unit professional and paraprofessional personnel are adequately trained and prepared, including:

1. standards that are consistent with any national or state-approved or -recognized certification, licensing, registration, or, in the absence of these requirements, other comparable requirements (including state personnel requirements) that apply to the profession or discipline in which such personnel are providing vocational rehabilitation services; and
2. to the extent that existing standards are not based on the highest requirements in the state applicable to a particular profession or discipline, the steps the state is currently taking and the steps the State Plans to take in accordance with the written plan to retrain or hire personnel within the designated state unit to meet standards that are based on the highest requirements in the state, including measures to notify designated state unit personnel, institutions of higher education, and other public agencies of these steps and the timelines for taking each step.

Be sure to include the following:

- specific strategies for retraining, recruiting, and hiring personnel;
- the specific time period by which all state unit personnel will meet the standards;
- procedures for evaluating the designated state unit's progress in hiring or retraining personnel to meet applicable personnel standards within the established time period;
- the identification of initial minimum qualifications that the designated state unit will require of newly hired personnel when the state unit is unable to hire new personnel who meet the established personnel standards;
- the identification of a plan for training newly hired personnel who do not meet the established standards to meet the applicable standards within the time period established for all state unit personnel to meet the established personnel standards.

The Division continues to use the national standard which is a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling or a closely related field, as defined by the Commission on Rehabilitation Counselor Certification (CRCC). During the past fiscal year, a total of 8 incumbent counselors have graduated from masters in rehabilitation counseling distance learning programs (7 from University of Kentucky and 1 from San Diego State University).

The Division currently has 17 staff (12 counselors and 5 staff in other positions) enrolled in graduate level programs in rehabilitation counseling (8 at University of Tennessee - Knoxville, 2 at Auburn University, 1 at the University of Kentucky, 1 at Winston-Salem University, 3 at North Texas State University and 1 at the University of Arkansas). Additionally, one counselor has a masters degree in a related area and is enrolled in San Diego State University to complete CORE courses needed to meet the CSPD standard. One counselor with a related master's degree completed core courses at the San Diego State University in December 2010 and now meets the state's CSPD standard. A total of 6 counseling staff are expected to complete their graduate programs and graduate during this federal fiscal year.

Despite the Divisions efforts to recruit and retain vocational rehabilitation counselors with masters degrees in rehabilitation counseling, The Division hires a number of applicants with bachelors degrees (minimum standard) primarily because of the inability to hire enough people who meet the state's CSPD standard... There are many reasons beyond the control of the Division as to why the majority of incumbent counselors and counselor applicants do not meet the national CSPD standard, including:

" There is an inadequate number of in-state masters degree training programs to feed candidates into our system. There are currently only two such university training programs in Tennessee (and these are located in the far eastern and western regions of the state).

" Many counselor positions are in rural areas where it is more difficult to recruit masters degree candidates.

" The vocational rehabilitation counselor 2 position requires a bachelor, not masters, degree due to the insufficient number of applicants holding the appropriate masters degrees.

" State law prohibits requiring incumbent counselors or new hires to get a masters degree as a condition of continued employment since the position does not require a masters degree.

" State civil service rules allow substitution of experience for education levels above the minimum qualification.

Additional obstacles the Division has been unable to overcome include:

" A limited number of RSA sponsored training grants, and the number is shrinking;

" Universities awarding RSA training grants to new students rather than continuing to sponsor counselors who started the program on RSA sponsored training grants.

" Limited training slots in existing university programs, even where we fund such training through our section 110 dollars; and

" Staff turnover.

Funding to support masters in rehabilitation counseling activities continues to be pursued through reallocation of traditional in-service training monies and utilization of funding received through our Social Security Administration (SSA) reimbursement program. Also, the Division continues to work closely with any college or university to help secure any grant funding made available to help the Division further counselor education.

Despite the Divisions extensive efforts to hire and retrain staff, currently only 48% of counseling staff have a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling (or closely related area) or are currently enrolled in CORE training program. The Division is focusing efforts to hire and retrain incumbent staff to ensure only qualified rehabilitation counselors are performing nondelegable functions by December 31, 2018. Until this date, all counseling staff, those that currently meet CSPD qualifications and those that do not, are permitted to continue performing all counseling duties, including nondelegable functions. Efforts are underway to work with the Divisions Human Resources Department regarding proposed changes in hiring practices.

All counselors, including new hires and incumbent staff, who do not meet the CSPD standard have an individualized training plan to address training needs. The individualized training plan identifies training topics directly tied to the timely and effective service delivery of vocational rehabilitation services. The development of an individualized training plan will be conducted jointly by the counselor and his/her immediate supervisor and will identify not only training in critical areas of service delivery, but also identify additional training geared to meet the individualized needs of each counselor. Discussion regarding enrollment in a masters in rehabilitation counseling program to comply with the CSPD standard will also be a part of the supervisor/counselor planning session.

Vocational rehabilitation counselors are being encouraged to take advantage of any training that will enable them to meet the CRC requirements. The state Department of Human Resources has guidelines in place for compensating employees who obtain a nationally recognized professional certification during their employment with the state.

The two main objectives outlined in their policy statement are:

1. To recognize employees who choose to enhance their competencies and service to the state through acquisition of knowledge and skills relevant to the performance of their major professional duties and responsibilities.
2. To provide an incentive to employees who successfully demonstrate acquisition of such competencies by attaining certification from a nationally recognized professional organization.

The intent is to provide both a means of encouraging employees to attain professional competencies and to provide an incentive for these employees to remain in state service. In an effort to assist CRC staff with maintaining this credential, the Division has received approval from the CRCC to provide continuing education credits for qualified training events.

Staff Development

Describe the state agency's policies, procedures, and activities to ensure that all personnel employed by the designated state unit receive appropriate and adequate training in terms of:

1. a system of staff development for professionals and paraprofessionals within the designated state unit, particularly with respect to assessment, vocational counseling, job placement, and rehabilitation technology; and
2. procedures for the acquisition and dissemination to designated state unit professionals and paraprofessionals significant knowledge from research and other sources.

The Department of Human Services' Division of Rehabilitation Services requires an annual training needs assessment to determine training needs of staff. Our training needs assessment is completed through the following methods:

1. Input from staff in all job classifications compiled into a statewide training needs report
2. Individual staff training plans
3. State rehabilitation management and administrative staff input
4. State Human Resources Department training division mandates
5. Rehabilitation Services Administration guidelines
6. Recommendations of the State Rehabilitation Council and the Statewide Independent Living Council.

Program case reviews conducted by the Divisions Program Evaluation and Quality Assurance Unit are also utilized to identify strengths and deficiencies among staff and related training needs.

Below are the top 5 training priorities based on staff and management feedback:

Training Topic

1. Leadership/supervisory training (managing performance, promoting critical thinking, conflict resolution, mentoring, caseload management/supervision, facilitating change).
2. Caseload management (moving a case through the VR process, critical casework activities such as eligibility determination, plan development, budgeting, etc.).
3. Communication skills/customer service (interviewing skills, effective

communication, how to deal with difficult people, cultural diversity)

4. Employment / placement training (including disability disclosure)

5. General on-boarding for new employees (vision/values, people first language, respectful workplace, customer service, departmental and division organization).

The Division continues to provide on-going training and technical assistance regarding the Americans with Disabilities Act to staff and the general public, including business and industry.

The Division continues to contract with technology centers across the state for training and technical assistance in rehabilitation technology services. Rehabilitation technology contracts are in place with the East Tennessee Technology Access Center (Knoxville), Technology Access Center of Middle Tennessee (Nashville), West Tennessee STAR Center (Jackson), Signal Center (Chattanooga), and Mid-South Access Center for Technology (Memphis).

The Divisions employees continue to receive specialized training in assessment and vocational evaluation activities. Through a partnership with the University of Memphis, vocational evaluators receive extensive instruction in the appropriate selection of assessment tools, interviewing skills, evaluation techniques and report writing.

Evaluators complete a competency examination with subsequent training provided based on the individualized needs of each employee. New counselors receive, via a new counselor training program, training relative to assessments, vocational evaluation and interpreting medical and psychological reports to assist them in acquiring skills to identify the specific strengths and weaknesses of individuals with disabilities. Training in the areas of vocational counseling, job placement and other topics relevant to client service delivery continue to be focal areas for the Division.

Division employees are encouraged to participate in web-based training events as offered through the Technical Assistance and Continuing Education (TACE) Center and other disability focused training events as available.

The Division continues to use a comprehensive training database for tracking training activities which includes names of staff completing each activity and pre-test and post-test scores. This database also includes employee's educational levels and credentials.

The Division has posted information memoranda on its intranet website to provide staff with an easily accessible means of acquiring information on current research, resources and related activities in the vocational rehabilitation field. Leadership staff also disseminates new information (such as the latest Institute on Rehabilitation Issues publications) through electronic conveyance. Employees, particularly those with specialized job responsibilities, are encouraged to attend conferences, seminars and training workshops relative to their specialty areas. Local, regional and statewide meetings provide an additional avenue for keeping

employees informed of new developments in the vocational rehabilitation field.

Personnel to Address Individual Communication Needs

Describe how the designated state unit has personnel or obtains the services of other individuals who are able to communicate in the native language of applicants or eligible individuals who have limited English speaking ability or in appropriate modes of communication with applicants or eligible individuals.

The Division has policies and procedures to ensure that it includes among its personnel, or has readily available, the services of (1) Individuals able to communicate in the native languages of applicants and eligible individuals who have limited English proficiency through WorldWide Interpreters; and (2) Individuals able to communicate with applicants or eligible individuals in appropriate modes of communication.

During staff orientation, new counselor training, annual Title VI training and other training activities, Division staff members are informed of specific procedures to be followed to communicate with limited English speaking individuals. Telephonic translation services are available through WorldWide Interpreters. All regions have received orientation packages to be used to train all of their staff in the use of this service.

The Division continues to recognize its responsibility for employing or obtaining the services of sign language interpreters, which fall within the definition of appropriate modes of communication in (34 CFR § 361.5(b) (5)), to the extent necessary to meet the communication needs of individuals who are deaf or deaf-blind. The Divisions policy addresses the (1) significance of such services, (2) the selection of service providers, (3) the scheduling and payment for services, and (4) an evaluation process for such services.

Coordination of Personnel Development Under the individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act

Describe the procedures and activities to coordinate the designated state unit's comprehensive system of personnel development with personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act.

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA 2004) provides renewed emphasis toward the planning of service delivery and collaboration of the various divisions and programs designated to serve children and youth with disabilities.

The Division has an interagency agreement with the Division of Special Education, state Department of Education providing administrative support for a coordinated, collaborative effort of service delivery. The Blind and Visually

Impaired Services unit continues an agreement with the Tennessee School for the Blind. Networking of the two divisions relative to transitioning services has provided a means for coordinating and sharing information relative to personnel development under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act. There is ongoing communication between the two divisions and each division has responsibility for providing input into personnel development activities.

An interagency agreement was developed to fulfill the requirements of the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA). The most recent version of this agreement was signed August 1, 2010. The purpose of this agreement is to identify and define the financial responsibility of each state agency for providing services under IDEA and to facilitate the provision and coordination of services for all children with disabilities. The following state agencies are participating in this agreement: Tennessee Department of Education; Tennessee Department of Children's Services; Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration; Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Bureau of TennCare; Tennessee Department of Finance and Administration, Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services; Tennessee Department of Health; Tennessee Department of Human Services; Tennessee Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities; and Tennessee Department of Correction.

Departmental representatives have formed the Secondary Transition Interagency Workgroup and hold monthly interagency meetings to identify and address issues relative to transition services, particularly what is happening in transition services and what is lacking (resource mapping). The Division's transition school to work coordinator is also serving on the Nashville Mayor's Advisory Council for Special Education in Metro Nashville Public Schools which includes a subcommittee specifically focused on employment initiatives for youth with disabilities. The coordinator also participates on the Post Secondary Task Force, the Next Steps Advisory Council, the Project Opportunity Advisory Council and the STEP board, a parent teaching organization. STEP has a secondary transition focus area and holds parent workshops across the state.

The Division continues to recognize the value of the involvement of the Division's State Rehabilitation Council in its personnel development activities. It is the policy of the Division to give the Council ongoing review and input on the development of issues associated with the Divisions Comprehensive System of Personnel Development. The Council continues to be involved with CSPD issues associated with recruitment and retention of staff, counselor salaries and pay incentives for successful attainment of a masters degree in rehabilitation, and training for existing staff to obtain their masters degree.

This screen was last updated on Jul 1 2011 1:02PM by satnoliverg

Attachment 4.11(a) Statewide Assessment

Provide an assessment of the rehabilitation needs of individuals with disabilities residing within the state, particularly the vocational rehabilitation services needs of:

- individuals with most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services;
- individuals with disabilities who are minorities;
- individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and
- individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system.

Identify the need to establish, develop, or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state.

The Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services (Division), in collaboration with the State Rehabilitation Council (SRC), completed a comprehensive assessment of the vocational rehabilitation needs of Tennesseans with disabilities in the fall of 2009 and is conducting needs assessments on a three-year cycle. As required in 34 CFR § 29, the information obtained from a number of sources was assessed and analyzed to determine: The needs of individuals with disabilities, particularly the vocational rehabilitation service needs of: (A) Individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who need supported employment services (Research Objective I); (B) Individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program (Research Objective II); (C) Individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system (Research Objective III); and The need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the state of Tennessee (Research Objective IV). METHODOLOGY A variety of methodologies were used in order to address the four stated research objectives. They included:

- A program needs assessment for the vocational rehabilitation program conducted by the Sparks Bureau of Business and Economic Research (SBBER) at The University of Memphis;
- Analysis of various disability populations statistics;
- Analysis of client and community feedback since the last assessment including an on-going customer satisfaction survey of individuals with disabilities who were served by the Division conducted by SBBER, input from regional management staff of the Division, input from the SRC, input from the Division's various constituency boards, and public hearings; and
- The Division's data and experience.

The methodology for each objective is outlined below. Research Objective I In order to assess individuals with the most significant disabilities, including their need for supported employment services, a vocational rehabilitation participant/client survey was created by SBBER. The sample population was drawn from the database of vocational rehabilitation clients that SBBER already surveys, which include Closure 26 clients, Closure 28 clients, and Active status clients. The survey was conducted via telephone by the survey interviewers at SBBER. The sample of Closure 26 participants represents at least

a 90% confidence level that the results of this survey accurately reflect the total population. The sample of Closure 28 participants represents at least a 90% confidence level that the results of this survey accurately reflect the total population. The sample of Active Client participants represents at least a 95% confidence level that the results of this survey accurately reflect the total population. All of the vocational rehabilitation participants surveyed were individuals with the most significant disabilities. The Division's data and experience was also used to complete this assessment. Research Objective II In order to address individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities that have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program, several databases were researched by the SBBER to provide critical numbers. Those databases included: The United States Census Bureau, The American Community Survey data, Social Security data, and Department of Labor data. The report was based on the data from those sites as well as the Division's data and experience. Research Objective III In order to assess individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system, a survey was created by SBBER to be administered to the staff and personnel of that system, including but not limited to Career Centers, One Stop Centers, and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors. The survey was administered via a web-based survey developed by the SBBER. The on-line computer survey was conducted through a web-based system that is completely anonymous. The Division's data and experience was also used to complete this assessment. Research Objective IV In order to make an assessment of the need to establish, develop, and/or improve community rehabilitation programs within the state, a survey was created to be administered to the staff, personnel, and Vocational Rehabilitation counselors of those programs as well as transition teachers in the school districts. The survey was administered via web-based survey developed by the SBBER. The on-line computer survey was conducted through a web-based system that is completely anonymous. The Division's data and experience was also used to complete this assessment.

ASSESSMENT RESULTS

Research Objective I This research objective focuses on determining the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who need supported employment services. With the Division being under an order of selection since 2001, it has focused heavily on meeting the needs of individuals with the most significant disabilities. All indications are the majority of these needs are being successfully met. - 95.4% of active and closed clients surveyed in 2008-2009 were satisfied with the overall quality of the vocational rehabilitation program. - In response to an open-ended question in the SBBER needs assessment asking what was missing from the vocational rehabilitation program, 441 respondents answered "nothing." The next highest response had 18. - The majority of client respondents to the needs assessment indicated their needs were being met by vocational rehabilitation. Clients viewed their most important needs as: 1. Job Placement 2. Training and education 3. Job Referral 4. Finding Jobs While clients viewed these needs as being met, the current economic situation has certainly added stress to meeting the employment needs of people with the most significant disabilities. The primary needs identified by clients as not being met are support services including child care, transportation, and living expenses (maintenance). The number one need identified by those surveyed other than clients is additional funding for the Division in order to continue to address the needs of those not

being served by the order of selection. Better communication throughout the system, including services to employers, and improved information flow to the general public were tied as the second greatest needs. In terms of supported employment, it was felt the need was being met by every group to their satisfaction except for family members. We believe this concern relates directly to, not to the supported employment service provided by vocational rehabilitation, but the challenge of appropriate follow-along services after the vocational rehabilitation services are completed. Research Objective II This research objective focuses on determining the needs of individuals with disabilities who are minorities and individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program. The largest known unserved group is those applicants who are not receiving services as a result of the Division's order of selection. While the Division has taken 11,312 cases off the waiting list since 2008, priority category 1 remains the only consistently open priority category. The Division has begun releasing priority category 2 cases and plans for regular releases in the future, in order to meet a wider spectrum of the needs. The order of selection explains why those in the special education system identified the most unmet needs of all groups surveyed. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) and its implementation of a free appropriate public education for all has created an expectation for educators, parents, and students that vocational rehabilitation will also be available for all. Tennessee's order of selection places those other than the most significantly disabled in the unserved category. Population By Race 2009 Division Served Tennessee Census White 69.1% 80.4% Black 29.5% 16.8% Other Minorities 1.4% 6.5% In terms of minorities, reviewing those served by the Division in 2009, Whites totaled 69.1%, Blacks totaled 29.5%, and Other Minorities totaled 1.4%. In comparison, from the Tennessee Census Bureau 2008 estimates, Whites totaled 80.4%, Blacks totaled 16.8%, and Other Minorities totaled 6.5% for the whole population in Tennessee. While these numbers indicate that Blacks are not underserved, an opportunity would potentially be indicated for Other Minorities. The Division's research and work with specialists seem to indicate Other Minorities, especially Hispanics, are less likely to seek assistance from programs like vocational rehabilitation. The Division, however, recognizes an increasing number of individuals living in Tennessee who speak only Spanish, as well as large populations of immigrants from Africa, Asia, and the Middle East. Needs for people with disabilities do not appear to differ across the racial scale as much as they do across an economic one. Increasing budget cuts at both the federal and state levels have accentuated the real needs of health care, child care, and personal care for people with disabilities. Other than those issues created by the order of selection, the Division is not aware of any underserved disability areas in the state. The Division is aware of the need to provide ongoing education and training to its staff regarding all disability areas, especially increasingly diagnosed ones such as Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD). Research Objective III This research objective focuses on determining the needs of individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system. The Division is an active partner in Tennessee's Workforce Investment System. Twenty-one counselors are located in various career centers across the state. Despite that, all of our clients surveyed felt that utilizing the career centers and one-stop centers was not applicable to them.

While this is expected to a degree because of the severity of the population the Division is currently serving, it also highlights the need for the system to become more disability friendly. Based upon input from Division personnel who participate on local Workforce boards and from the Division's counselors who serve the Career Centers, individuals with disabilities served through other components of the workforce system require the following services and accommodations from the Career Centers: - Continued efforts to meet program accessibility and accommodation needs; - Understanding of referral processes and eligibility for program services; - Navigation through the career center programs; - Collaboration with and feedback from program case managers; and - Disability awareness and etiquette training for the workforce staff. Research Objective IV This research objective focuses on determining the need to establish, develop or improve community rehabilitation programs (CRPs) within the state of Tennessee. Findings indicated the following needs: - Supported employment particularly in rural areas; - Expansion of employment networks to meet the needs of clients; - CRPs to do quality trial work experience; - Additional job coaches for supported employment and non-supported employment clients throughout the state; - Additional work adjustment resources throughout the state, especially in areas not covered by the Division's community rehabilitation centers; - Qualified vocational evaluations throughout the state, especially in Davidson and Shelby Counties; - CRPs, especially in rural counties, to meet the needs of deaf-blind individuals; and - Transportation services, especially in rural counties, to access services and employment.

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Attachment 4.11(b) Annual Estimates

- Identify the number of individuals in the state who are eligible for services.
- Identify the number of eligible individuals who will receive services provided with funds under:
 - Part B of Title I;
 - Part B of Title VI;
 - each priority category, if under an order of selection.
- Identify the cost of services for the number of individuals estimated to be eligible for services. If under an order of selection, identify the cost of services for each priority category.

1. Tennessee's population based on United States Census Bureau estimates for 2009 is 6,296,254. Tennessee's population 21 to 64 is 3,579,617.

Research data from the 2007 American Community Survey indicates that:

- A. Approximately 12.8% of Americans 21 to 64 have a disability.
- B. Approximately 58.2% of those Americans with a disability have an employment disability.
- C. Approximately 16.8% of Tennesseans age 21 to 64 have a disability.
- D. Approximately 61.4% of those Tennesseans with a disability have an employment disability.

Research data further indicates the percentage of people with disabilities in Tennessee employed remains below the national averages.

2. In Fiscal Year 2010, the Division of Rehabilitation Services provided services to 29,748 individuals. Of this number 26,605 met the eligibility criteria of the program. A total of 2,679 were individuals who met the eligibility criteria, but were not in an open priority category as of September 30, 2010. It is projected that 31,200 individuals will receive services and that 27,935 individuals will meet the eligibility criteria of the program and receive services in accordance with the Order of Selection during Fiscal Year 2012.

It is estimated that the number of individuals to be served during Fiscal Year 2012 under each priority category within our Order of Selection will be:

Priority Category #1 19,500* * This number includes an estimated 2,300 individuals eligible for Title VI, Part B Supported Employment

Priority Category #2 11,590

Priority Category #3 100

Priority Category #4 10

31,200 TOTAL

1. It is estimated that the cost of services for the projected 31,200 individuals will be approximately \$31,000,000 and that the service cost for each priority category within the Order of Selection for the 27,935 individuals served will be:

Priority Category #1 \$19,637,340* * This number includes 1.6 million Title I, Part B funds plus our Title VI, Part B funds to serve individuals eligible for Supported Employment

Priority Category #2 \$ 11,258,660

Priority Category #3 \$ 95,000

Priority Category #4 \$ 9,000

\$ 31,000,000 TOTAL

Category	Title I or Title VI	Estimated Funds	Estimated Number to be Served	Average Cost of Services
1		\$19,637,340	19,500	\$1,007
2		\$11,258,660	11590	\$971
3		\$95,000	100	\$950
4		\$9,000	10	\$900
				—
				—
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				—
Totals		\$31,000,000	31,200	\$993

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Attachment 4.11(c)(1) State Goals and Priorities

The goals and priorities are based on the comprehensive statewide assessment, on requirements related to the performance standards and indicators, and on other information about the state agency. (See section 101(a)(15)(C) of the Act.) This attachment should be updated when there are material changes in the information that require the description to be amended.

- Identify if the goals and priorities were jointly developed and agreed to by the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has a council.
- Identify if the state VR agency and the State Rehabilitation Council, if the state has such a council, jointly reviewed the goals and priorities and jointly agreed to any revisions.
- Identify the goals and priorities in carrying out the vocational rehabilitation and supported employment programs.
- Ensure that the goals and priorities are based on an analysis of the following areas:
 - the most recent comprehensive statewide assessment, including any updates;
 - the performance of the state on standards and indicators; and
 - other available information on the operation and effectiveness of the VR program, including any reports received from the State Rehabilitation Council and findings and recommendations from monitoring activities conducted under section 107.

The goals and priorities of the Division of Rehabilitation Services for Fiscal Year 2012, as developed and agreed to by the Division of Rehabilitation Services staff and the State Rehabilitation Council, are focused around the Division's strategic plan.

The goals and priorities for 2012 are:

Goal 1. Increase Successful Employment Outcomes

Objective 1.1: Increase Successful Employment Outcomes by 10% over Federal Fiscal Year 2011

- Increase Priority Category 1 and 2 referrals by 10% over federal fiscal year 2011. Since the Division has been in an Order of Selection since 2001, the opportunity exists to reinvigorate historical referral sources for Priority Category 2 cases. This effort will include development of marketing initiatives for use in local areas for community outreach as well as joint efforts with Tennessee's Department of Labor and Workforce Development, Department of Economic and Community Development, Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, Department of Children's Services and Department of Mental Health. The Division will develop strategies for increasing referrals of transition school to work clients through local education agencies. Special focus will include the identification of any underserved population at the regional level.

- Provide caseload carrying and employment counselors with targeted training on career planning/exploration including how to implement through the counseling and guidance process.
- Establish a stronger focus and recognition of employment related activities including:
 - Placing additional employment counselors in regions where needed,
 - Building a comprehensive network of employment resources across the state, and
 - Continuing to develop and provide services to employers promoting the value of the Division and the hiring of people with disabilities.
- Develop and implement new Community Rehabilitation Provider training for both staff and vendors.
- Revise the current Community Rehabilitation Provider monitoring process to be both more effective and efficient.
- Ensure that at least 92% of individuals served and closed with successful employment outcomes will be individuals with significant disabilities.
- Work collaboratively with Tennessee's Alliance for Full Participation (AFP) (an alliance that includes the Tennessee Council on Developmental Disabilities (CDD), and the Tennessee Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities (DIDD), Disability Law and Advocacy Center (CAP), and University Centers for Excellence) to develop a state plan for the national AFP summit committed to doubling the number of people with disabilities employed nationwide.
- Continue to work collaboratively with and provide greater technical assistance to the workforce investment programs including career centers. The Division will continue to have counselors housed in each of the primary workforce service delivery areas and will visit all other satellite centers on an itinerant basis.

Objective 1.2: Open Priority Category 2 by September 30, 2012

The Division is establishing regular bi-monthly release of Priority Category 2 waiting list cases during federal fiscal year 2011. The goal of the Division is to open Priority Category 2 by September 30, 2012.

Goal 2. Improve Efficiency and Effectiveness in Client Services Delivery System

Objective 2.1: To Increase the Rehabilitation Rate (Success Rate) to 55.8% for FY 2012 (Success rate is determined by the number of Status 26 (Rehabilitated

Cases) divided by the number of Status 26 plus the number of Status 28 (Non-Rehabilitated Cases).)

Objective 2.2: To Adhere to Quality Standards

- Achieve a 96% or higher satisfaction rating for the vocational rehabilitation program as reported by the consumer satisfaction survey program for successful outcome closures.
- Complete implementation of the Division's new electronic case management system (TRIMS).

Objective 2.3: To Implement a New Organizational Development System to Ensure that Staff Obtain and Maintain Core Competencies

- Build a comprehensive staff development program to include measures of current competencies and goals to be reached by all staff. While including all staff, the effort will especially focus on those staff providing service delivery, including:
 - Caseload carrying counselors,
 - Employment Counselors,
 - Vocational Evaluators, and
 - Rehabilitation Assistants.
- Implement supervisory training for new and existing supervisors focusing on supervisory skills, employment, caseload management, and critical thinking skills.
- Provide training opportunities to educate rehabilitation staff concerning ongoing and emerging disability issues including Traumatic Brain Injury, Autism Spectrum Disorder, Psychiatric Disorders, Serving the Deaf/Hard of Hearing and Blind/Visually Impaired, and Medical Aspects of Disabilities.
- The Tennessee Technology Access Program Executive Director and his partners will continue their staff training and consultation to ensure staff appropriately considers technology options.

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Attachment 4.11(c)(3) Order of Selection

- Identify the order to be followed in selecting eligible individuals to be provided vocational rehabilitation services.
- Identify the justification for the order.
- Identify the service and outcome goals.
- Identify the time within which these goals may be achieved for individuals in each priority category within the order.
- Describe how individuals with the most significant disabilities are selected for services before all other individuals with disabilities.

Justification for order of selection

On August 1, 2001, the Division of Rehabilitation Services implemented an Order of Selection due to funding limitations that would not allow the Division to provide services to all eligible individuals who apply. The Division will continue to operate under an Order of Selection during Fiscal Year 2012. The Order of Selection has four priority categories and only Priority Category 1 (eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities) remains continuously open – with scheduled releases from Priority Category 2. In 2009, the Division released 6,174 cases from the waiting list, 559 were released in 2010, and 3,085 have been released to date in 2011. The Division's funds and resources, however, are not adequate to serve all individuals who apply for services. Therefore, execution of the Order of Selection mandated by the Rehabilitation Act of 1973, as amended, was and is still warranted. The Order of Selection serves as a means of determining which eligible individuals will be served.

The Division monitors services and expenditures on a continuous basis, allowing the Division to manage available funds to assure sustainability of services for cases placed in an open priority category and receiving services under an Individualized Plan for Employment (IPE). Additionally, adequate funds will continue to be conserved to provide assessment services for all applicants expected to apply throughout the year to determine eligibility and to provide services for those eligible individuals placed in an open priority category within the Order of Selection.

Description of Priority categories

PRIORITY CATEGORY I -- Eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities

PRIORITY CATEGORY II -- Eligible individuals who have significant disabilities

PRIORITY CATEGORY III -- Eligible individuals who do not have significant disabilities and whose vocational rehabilitation is expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services

PRIORITY CATEGORY IV -- Eligible individuals who do not have a significant disability that cannot be classified into a higher priority category

DEFINITIONS

"Most Significant Disability" means the individual meets the criteria for having a significant disability but has a physical or mental impairment that seriously limits two or more functional capacities in terms of an employment outcome.

"Significant Disability" means the individual meets the three following criteria:

1. The individual has a severe physical or mental impairment which seriously limits at least one functional capacity (such as mobility, communication, self-care, self-direction, interpersonal skills, work tolerance, or work skills) in terms of an employment outcome; and
2. The individual has one or more physical or mental disabilities resulting from amputation, arthritis, autism, blindness, burn injury, cancer, cerebral palsy, cystic fibrosis, deafness, head injury, heart disease, hemiplegia, hemophilia, respiratory or pulmonary dysfunction, mental retardation, mental illness, multiple sclerosis, muscular dystrophy, musculoskeletal disorders, neurological disorders (including stroke and epilepsy), paraplegia, quadriplegia and other spinal cord conditions, sickle cell anemia, specific learning disability, and end-stage renal disease; or another disability or combination of disabilities determined on the basis of an assessment for determining eligibility, and vocational rehabilitation needs to cause comparable substantial functional limitation; and
3. The individual's vocational rehabilitation program can be expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services over an extended period of time.

Non-Significant Disability means the individual does not meet the criteria for significant disability or the criteria for most significant disability.

Multiple vocational rehabilitation services mean two or more major vocational rehabilitation services, i.e. physical or mental restoration, training, counseling, guidance and placement. Excluded are support services such as transportation, maintenance, and the routine counseling and guidance that should take place in every case.

Priority of categories to receive VR services under the order

Currently, the only open Priority Category for the Division is Priority Category 1.

If the Division cannot continue to serve all new Priority Category 1 cases (eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities) who apply, then services will be provided to new PC 1 cases based on the date of application for services. Likewise, should the Division have funding resources to open a closed priority

category, but not be able to provide services to all cases currently awaiting services in that category; then services will be provided based on the date of application for vocational rehabilitation services. All waiting list releases have been based on date of application. The releases to date have served all Priority Category 2 cases with application dates prior to March 31, 2011 and all Priority Category 3 and 4 cases with application dates prior to July 15, 2009. The Division's Order of Selection is developed in keeping with 34 CFR § 361.36 of the final regulations.

Service and outcome goals and the time within which the goals will be achieved

The Order of Selection priority categories, justification, outcome and service goals, and time frames are as follows:

PRIORITY CATEGORY I -- Eligible individuals who have the most significant disabilities

Justification: Federal law and regulations require that individuals who have the most significant disabilities be selected for services before other eligible individuals with disabilities.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 1,100 individuals in this priority category. Serve 19,500 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2012.

PRIORITY CATEGORY II -- Eligible individuals who have significant disabilities

Justification: Individuals in this category make up a large portion of the unemployed population with disabilities due to serious limitations of functional capacities and require special consideration in an Order of Selection.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 766 individuals in this priority category. Serve 10,000 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2012.

PRIORITY CATEGORY III -- Eligible individuals who do not have significant disabilities and whose vocational rehabilitation is expected to require multiple vocational rehabilitation services

Justification: Individuals in this category are the most disabled of the group without significant disabilities due to their expected need for multiple services.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 30 individuals in this priority category. Serve 100 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2012.

PRIORITY CATEGORY IV -- Eligible individuals who do not have a significant disability that cannot be classified into a higher priority category

Justification: This is a category to include all other eligible individuals. This category will assure all eligible individuals would receive services if sufficient funds are available to open this category.

Outcome and Service Goal: Rehabilitate 4 individuals in this priority category. Serve 10 individuals in this priority category.

Time frame to achieve goal: Goal will be achieved by September 30, 2012.

Priority Category	Number of individuals to be served	Estimated number of individuals who will exit with employment after receiving services	Estimated number of individuals who will exit without employment after receiving services	Time within which goals are to be achieved	Cost of services
1	19,500	1,100	0	September 30, 2012	
2	11,590	766	0	September 30, 2012	
3	100	30	0	September 30, 2012	
4	10	4	0	September 30, 2012	

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Attachment 4.11(c)(4) Goals and Plans for Distribution of Title VI, Part B Funds

Specify the state's goals and priorities with respect to the distribution of funds received under section 622 of the Act for the provision of supported employment services.

The Division continues to provide supported employment services to eligible clients with the most significant disabilities who have been determined to require on-going support services in order to maintain employment.

Supported employment services are funded through Title VI, Part B funds. As Title VI, Part B funds are depleted, the continuance of the Division's supported employment services is made possible through Title I, Part B funds. The Division anticipates spending in excess of 1.6 million dollars of Title I, Part B funds in addition to its Title VI, Part B funding allotment (projected to be approximately \$503,079 in Fiscal Year 2012).

It is the continued goal of the Division to provide quality supported employment services which are delivered in an effective, efficient and timely manner. Supported employment services are provided through letters of understanding with community rehabilitation providers, and in cooperation with the Division of Intellectual Disabilities Services and the Department of Mental Health and Developmental Disabilities. The community rehabilitation providers must assure that on-going support services will be provided prior to the implementation of supported employment services. The Division has an excellent supported employment program along with training and support activities to ensure the continued provision of quality supported employment services. These programs are ongoing and are not subject to a specific timeline. Two prime examples of these ongoing activities are:

- through contract with the University of Tennessee, the Division funds three supported employment consultants who are charged with the responsibility of working with our many supported employment community rehabilitation providers in providing training and technical assistance to the staff who provide services to our clients. These same consultants also work with the Division staff on an as needed basis to provide SE training and technical assistance to our staff. And
- the Division also involves the regional supervisory staff and quality improvement unit in the monitoring of and consultation to the community rehabilitation providers to ensure appropriate services are being provided to our clients.

The Division plans to continue the funding of the SE consultants activities as well as continue the provision of in-house monitoring of the services provided to the Division's clients by the SE community rehabilitation providers.

The Division will continue to seek community rehabilitation providers to provide supported employment services to under-served disability groups with the most significant disabilities who, because of their disability, have not been able to

enter traditional competitive employment or whose employment is intermittent or interrupted due to a most significant disability. The Division expects to continue increasing employment opportunities for those individuals eligible for supported employment with co-occurring disorders of mental illness and alcohol and drug abuse by expanding more effective partnerships with mental health entities that work with this population and implementing improved services. The Division has a mental health state office field liaison who works with mental health entities and the Division's staff in developing such partnerships where needed and who provides training and technical assistance to the mental health community rehabilitation providers and our staff.

The Division expects to serve in excess of 2,700 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2012 and achieve successful employment outcomes for 375 clients.

This screen was last updated on Jul 1 2011 12:04PM by satnoliverg

Attachment 4.11(d) State's Strategies

This attachment should include required strategies and how the agency will use these strategies to achieve its goals and priorities, support innovation and expansion activities, and overcome any barriers to accessing the vocational rehabilitation and the supported employment programs. (See sections 101(a)(15)(D) and (18)(B) of the Act and Section 427 of the General Education Provisions Act (GEPA)).

Describe the methods to be used to expand and improve services to individuals with disabilities.

Identify how a broad range of assistive technology services and assistive technology devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities at each stage of the rehabilitation process; and describe how assistive technology services and devices will be provided to individuals with disabilities on a statewide basis.

Identify what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who are minorities, including those with the most significant disabilities; and what outreach procedures will be used to identify and serve individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the VR program.

If applicable, identify plans for establishing, developing, or improving community rehabilitation programs within the state.

Describe strategies to improve the performance of the state with respect to the evaluation standards and performance indicators.

Describe strategies for assisting other components of the statewide workforce investment system in assisting individuals with disabilities.

Describe how the agency's strategies will be used to:

- achieve goals and priorities identified in Attachment 4.11(c)(1);
- support innovation and expansion activities; and
- overcome identified barriers relating to equitable access to and participation of individuals with disabilities in the state Vocational Rehabilitation Services Program and the state Supported Employment Services Program.

The state plan shall include an assurance that the state will reserve and use a portion of the funds allotted to the state under Section 110 for the development and implementation of innovative approaches to expand and improve the provision of vocational rehabilitation services to individuals with disabilities, particularly individuals with the most significant disabilities, consistent with the findings of our statewide needs assessment and our goals and priorities.

Funds will be utilized in Fiscal Year 2012 for addressing the following priorities that continue to be identified in our needs assessment as they relate to individuals with the most significant disabilities, including those who need supported employment services; individuals with disabilities who are minorities;

individuals with disabilities who have been unserved or underserved by the vocational rehabilitation program; and individuals with disabilities served through other components of the statewide workforce investment system and personnel assisting those individuals through the components of the system: Education and Training; Employment Opportunities; Information; Support Services; and Counseling and Guidance.

In addition, as the Division continues to regularly release Priority Category 2 cases from the Order of Selection waiting list, more individuals with significant disabilities are able to access vocational rehabilitation services. It is anticipated this activity will lead to improvement in the number of individuals with significant disabilities reaching successful rehabilitation outcome status.

Continue the practice of ensuring the availability of appropriate training activities and resources to meet the individualized needs of clients by seeking out and developing partnerships with other private and public entities to provide specialized education and training activities, to include those that can be provided through self-employment, on-the-job-training by employers, and customized employment.

Continue the development and expansion of statewide employer relationships that focus on inclusion of employees with disabilities in the workforce and the value of hiring people with disabilities.

Continue to support expansion of supported employment services by actively seeking out, training, and monitoring community rehabilitation providers, especially in the more rural areas, that are willing to provide supported employment services to vocational rehabilitation clients with the most significant disabilities; and by fostering partnerships to implement employment network projects with community rehabilitation providers.

Continue to increase employment opportunities for clients through development, training, and monitoring of community rehabilitation providers providing job coach pools and employment services; continuation of an on-the-job training initiative; partnering with Disability Employment Partners; targeted marketing and education services to employers; and the provision of additional technical support and expertise to Division staff and clients in the areas of technology, ongoing and emerging disability issues, and supported employment issues.

Continue to support expansion of Transition School-to-Work services by continuing to work with Local Education Agencies (LEA's) in the maintenance of existing partnerships and the creation of additional partnerships to provide vocational rehabilitation services targeted specifically to that LEA's school system; continuing to work with and educate school personnel on the mission and scope of the Division in order to maximize services from both entities to better serve our mutual clientele.

Continue improvement in the service delivery of the Division's 17 community rehabilitation centers and the comprehensive rehabilitation center at Smyrna geared directly toward providing services leading to successful

employment of individuals with the most significant disabilities. Pursue the development of additional service delivery entities in metropolitan and rural markets for services including vocational evaluation, personal and work adjustment, job development, job placement, and job coaching.

Continue support of vocational rehabilitation counselor development by encouraging and supporting vocational rehabilitation counselors to obtain masters degrees in rehabilitation counseling. The Division will pursue all available RSA slots for masters level training available to the Tennessee Division of Rehabilitation Services through outreach and research. The Division will continue utilization of recruiter staff for recruiting vocational rehabilitation counselors who have a masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. Finally, the Division will continue financial support of counselors seeking masters degrees.

Develop and implement a comprehensive staff development program based on core competencies for each role.

Continue to provide training, via internal and external avenues, to vocational rehabilitation counselors, supervision, and staff to reinforce and encourage the Division's goals and priorities.

Continue to implement a marketing/outreach plan that targets and reaches unserved or underserved populations to include all minorities, such as Spanish-speaking clients and clients with traumatic brain injury, autism, deaf-blindness, and mental illness; targets individuals with disabilities who meet our Order of Selection Priority Category 1 and 2 classifications; and targets SSA beneficiaries seeking employment.

Continue to support the Workforce Investment System by continuing to co-locate vocational rehabilitation counselors in each of the major WIA Service delivery area career centers and ensuring that all career center satellites also have vocational rehabilitation counselors assigned to visit their centers on a regular basis to work with individuals with disabilities that visit each center.

Continue to provide cross training to the career center staff in regard to meeting the needs of individuals with disabilities. Continue to provide consultation on career center accessibility and accommodation needs in regard to the accessibility needs in the building(s) and accommodations in terms of appropriate technology needed to serve individuals with the most significant disabilities. Continue to partner with the WIA career centers in employment initiatives such as the summer youth employment project.

Continue to support the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Program and use of other Social Security work incentives that benefit clients by continuing to have Division staff dedicated to the Ticket to Work and Self-Sufficiency Programs. These dedicated staff members will provide expert advice to Division field staff, clients and families on the SSA work incentives in regard to educational and work incentives, including how clients can utilize SSA health benefits while in the vocational rehabilitation program and how employment will affect such benefits upon successful employment. Continue to promote the most effective use of Ticket to Work Employment Network programs for the Division and our partners.

Continue training for counselors, evaluators and related vocational rehabilitation staff on how effective rehabilitation technology options lead to successful employment outcomes.

Continue support of the State Rehabilitation Council. Council members will be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services).

Continue support of the Statewide Independent Living Council. Council members will be reimbursed for reasonable and necessary expenses for attending Council meetings and performing Council duties (including child care and personal assistance services).

Continue to submit to the Commissioner an annual report of how funds are utilized relative to innovation and expansion activities.

Continue to provide a coordinated, comprehensive and statewide assistive technology delivery system through a network of contracted assistive technology centers. Each of these five centers, strategically located in Memphis, Jackson, Nashville, Chattanooga and Knoxville ensure access to clients from all 95 counties in Tennessee regardless of location. The centers diverse staff includes: Rehabilitation Engineers, Speech and Language Pathologists, Assistive Technologists, Orientation and Mobility Specialists, Therapists and other professionals and provide clients with evaluation, training, device fabrication and follow up services. By providing clients with access to this highly trained and skilled resource, and by purchasing the required devices, clients have the tools that they need throughout their rehabilitation program to assist them in realizing their IPE goals.

Finalize implementation of the electronic case management system (TRIMS) to enhance the Division's technological infrastructure and client service capabilities.

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Attachment 4.11(e)(2) Evaluation and Reports of Progress

Vocational Rehabilitation (VR) and Supported Employment (SE) Goals

1. Clearly identify all VR program goals consistent with the goals described in the FY 2010 Attachment 4.11(c)(1), including an evaluation of the extent to which the VR program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

The goals and priorities of the Division of Rehabilitation Services for Fiscal Year 2010, as developed and agreed to by the Division of Rehabilitation Services staff and the State Rehabilitation Council, are:

1. Streamline focus of the Division of Rehabilitation Services for client-centered, effective, successful service.

a. Provide services to approximately 30,000 individuals. Services include information and referral for individuals on the waiting list in a closed priority category. As of 4/30/2009, there were 5,736 eligible individuals on the waiting list in closed priority categories. The Division plans to implement a needs test on tuition in FY 2010 in order to maximize the number of clients that we serve.

Achievement - The Division served 29,748 individuals in 2010. The Division released 559 cases from the waiting list in 2010. The needs test on tuition was implemented on October 2009.

b. Achieve successful outcomes for at least 2,485 individuals with disabilities. A successful outcome means suitable employment that continues for a minimum of 90 days. (While the Division will continue to strive for the highest number of successful outcomes possible, it has set this minimum goal in accordance with 34 CFR § 361.84(c)(1)(i) Performance Indicator 1.1.)

Achievement - The Division achieved 1,651 successful outcomes in 2010. Achievement of this goal was impeded by a state unemployment rate of 9.1% in 2010. Many rural counties experienced unemployment rates between 12% and 19%.

c. At least 95% of individuals served and closed with successful employment outcomes will be individuals with significant disabilities.

Achievement - 94.07% of the individuals served and closed successfully in 2010 were people with significant disabilities.

d. The success rate for individuals determined eligible and receiving services will be at least 56%. Success rate is determined by the number of Status 26 (Rehabilitated Cases) divided by the number of Status 26 plus the number of Status 28 (Non-Rehabilitated Cases).

Achievement - The success rate for the Division in 2010 was 47.83% as a result of the low number of successful outcomes resulting from the high unemployment rate.

e. Achieve a 96% or higher satisfaction rating for the vocational rehabilitation program as reported by the consumer satisfaction survey program for successful outcome closures.

Achievement – The Division achieved a 96.9% satisfaction rating for successful outcome closures in 2010.

f. Continue to promote and provide training to optimize the use of the client intake process to facilitate more counseling to include considerations such as healthcare, impact on SSA benefits, and economic needs through measures such as an improved application document. - PowerPoint training presentations will be developed that are specific to the intake process which will address all aspects of the intake document to include the considerations mentioned above. These presentations will be available for training in groups as needed and will be stored electronically so that they can be accessed at any time for individual training.

Achievement - The Division continues to use the revised intake process for all clients in 2010 which has improved the counseling and guidance provided by counselors. Training on the intake process is provided for new counselors during new counselor training.

g. Continue to enhance employment success for clients through the following services:

i. Supported employment - The Division plans to seek out/help facilitate the development of additional supported employment providers for individuals with dual diagnoses as well as other supported employment providers in those rural areas that currently have no providers.

Achievement - The Division maintained dialogue with the appropriate state agencies on how best to serve our dual diagnoses clients. The Division also actively pursued additional supported employment providers across the state.

ii. Job coaches - Each geographical region is working on developing, maintaining, and training a job coach pool that will be available as needed to support clients in their work endeavors. In addition, the Division will partner with other entities to provide additional job coach expertise to VR staff and clients who need customized employment.

Achievement - The Division established job coach pools in a number of the rural community TRC's to serve those clients.

iii. Appropriate self employment - All new counselors will be trained on self employment policy and best practices to ensure they have the knowledge necessary to discuss and aid clients in the self employment process.

Achievement - The Division has included a session on self-employment in new counselor training.

2. Develop staff motivation and skills to deliver client-centered counseling.

a. Continue our emphasis on client-centered values and services - A comprehensive statewide training on client centered counseling and client centered services will be completed specifically geared to management who will become the trainers and mentors to the Division staff. In addition, PowerPoint presentations will be developed on this subject and used for all new counselors as well as those counselors who may need remedial training. The PowerPoint presentations will be made readily available as they will be stored electronically for use as needed.

Achievement - The Division's regional trainers and several of the regional supervisors have provided regional training sessions for staff using PowerPoint presentations on the following topics: Client Center Services, Strength-based Approach to Serving VR Clients, Creating a Partnership. All 3 of these are client focused, values-driven and were used in new counselor training. These presentations were also part of the supervisory training at the state parks in 2010.

b. Continue to support and encourage counselors seeking masters degrees in rehabilitation counseling - The Division plans to continue fully funding several staff in attainment of their masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. This will be done with state funds and is in addition to Division sponsorship of books and other support services for the staff involved in the RSA funded slots for the masters degree in rehabilitation counseling. In addition, the Division will contract with the University of Memphis to develop and deliver courses to staff that have a masters' degree in a related field and only need a few core courses which would allow them to be eligible to sit for the CRCC.

Achievement - In 2010, a total of 8 incumbent counselors graduated from masters in rehabilitation counseling distance learning programs (7 from University of Kentucky and 1 from San Diego State University). In addition, the Division had 17 staff enrolled in graduate level programs in rehabilitation counseling (8 at University of Tennessee - Knoxville, 2 at Auburn University, 1 at the University of Kentucky, 1 at Winston-Salem University, 3 at North Texas State University and 1 at the University of Arkansas). Additionally, one counselor has a masters degree in a related area and is enrolled in San Diego State University to complete a few CORE courses needed to meet the CSPD standard. One counselor with a related master's degree completed core courses at the San Diego State University in December 2010 and now meets the state's CSPD standard.

These efforts were supported by a range of incentives described in Attachment 4.10.

c. Continue to expand core course training for all counseling staff, with special emphasis on those not holding a masters degree. The Division will encourage those staff not currently holding masters degrees to attend the core course training to be provided by the University of Memphis as well as other training on various subjects that will enhance their knowledge and expertise in working with individuals with disabilities to achieve successful employment.

Achievement – The Division held statewide training in summer 2010 which included core coursework.

d. Continue training for counselors, evaluators and related vocational rehabilitation staff on how effective rehabilitation technology options lead to successful employment outcomes - The Division will continue the contract with the University of Memphis to provide group and one-on-one training for vocational evaluators on making the appropriate recommendations for technology assistance as related to recommended vocational outcomes. The Tennessee Technology Access Project Executive Director and his staff will continue their staff training and consultation to ensure staff appropriately considers technology options when working with their clients.

Achievement - The state's five regional assistive technology centers provide regular trainings to the Division's staff on how effective rehabilitation technology options lead to successful employment outcomes.

3. Reach out to stakeholders to build resources, reputation and results.

a. Continue implementation of marketing/outreach plan that:

i. Targets and reaches unserved or underserved populations, such as:

- Spanish speaking clients - In partnership with Austin Peay State University, the Division will continue training staff on Spanish language as it relates to vocational rehabilitation services. Also, brochures and marketing information will be available in Spanish for the field staff to use in marketing the program in their local communities.

- and clients with TBI, autism, deaf-blindness, and mental illness - The Division will continue working with the VA Hospitals and other veterans organizations on serving veterans with traumatic brain injury. A statewide training on autism is planned in partnership with the Autism Society of Middle Tennessee. The training will focus on the different types of autism and how to best work with clients. The Division has hired a deaf-blind specialist who will be working with the field staff and those community agencies and programs that serve individuals with deaf-blindness. The Division expects to increase employment opportunities for those individuals eligible for supported employment with dual diagnoses of mental illness and alcohol and drug problems by developing more and better partnerships with mental health entities that work with this population.

Achievement – The Division provided diversity training in the summer of 2010 to all staff to help them better reach potentially unserved or underserved populations. The Division's brochures and marketing information are available in Spanish. The Division continues to provide training on disability related areas to both identify and reach potentially unserved and underserved populations.

- ii. Targets individuals with disabilities who meet our Order of Selection open Priority Category 1 classification - The Division will continue to seek out those community organizations, both private and public, that work with individuals that would meet the Priority Category 1 classification.

Achievement – The Division continues to focus in this area.

- iii. Targets SSA beneficiaries seeking employment - The Division will enter into Ticket to Work Partnership Plus projects with community rehabilitation providers. These partnership will be developed in an effort to provide better follow along services to our clients (funded by SSA milestone payments) which should help them maintain their jobs for a longer period of time.; and

Achievement – The Division continues to operate under the cost reimbursement method with SSA.

- iv. Clearly conveys the employment purpose of our services - The Division will develop and dispense brochures that directly target employers. Through a contractual agreement with the University of Tennessee, Corporate Connections account representatives will continue marketing our clients and program to employers. In addition, the Division will continue to participate in and support the expansion of the newly formed Nashville Area Business Leadership Network.

Achievement – The Division continues marketing through University of Tennessee, Corporate Connections and participates in the Nashville Area Business Leadership Network along with other local organizations focusing on the employment of people with disabilities.

b. Continue to encourage partnerships with transportation providers to expand options for clients to participate in vocational rehabilitation and to secure sustainable transportation for employment - Two major metropolitan areas (Memphis and Knoxville) will enter into agreements with their local transportation authorities to allow the Division to dispense bus tickets to clients when they visit the vocational rehabilitation offices.

Achievement - The Division continues to promote transportation for people with disabilities seeking employment in rural areas, and provides bus tickets to clients in major metropolitan areas.

c. Establish community resource providers in major metropolitan areas of the state for provision of employment services including work adjustment training, job readiness training, job development, and job coaching - The Division will develop and implement two programs (Memphis and Jackson) in partnership with Goodwill Industries that will provide employment services including work adjustment training, job readiness training, job development, Job placement, job retention and job coaching.

Achievement – The Division implemented a contract with Goodwill Industries in Memphis to provide employment services and continues to work with other community resource providers.

d. Continue to work collaboratively with and provide greater technical assistance to the workforce investment programs including career centers - The Division will continue to have counselors housed in each of the primary workforce service delivery areas and will visit all other satellite centers on an itinerant basis. In addition, the Division will enter into a partnership with the Department of Labor and the Developmental Disability Council to establish job coaches in three primary service delivery areas who are trained in the provision of customized employment.

e. Continue to encourage partnerships with local school systems for specialized vocational rehabilitation counselors to serve Transition from School to Work clients - The Division will work to increase the number of Transition from School to Work contracts with local education agencies. In addition, the Division will partner with the Developmental Disability Council and Vanderbilt University in the development and provision of education and employment services for clients transitioning from high school who are interested in post secondary education.

Achievement 3d and 3e - The Division serves as a leader in facilitating communication, collaboration, and partnerships within the State of Tennessee, with vendors, and partners.

2. Identify all supported employment program goals consistent with the goals described in Attachment 4.11(c)(4), including an evaluation of the extent to which the supported employment program goals were achieved.

- Identify the strategies that contributed to the achievement of the goals.
- Provide a description of the factors that impeded the achievement of the goals and priorities.

Goal - The Division expects to serve in excess of 3,000 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2010 and achieve successful employment outcomes for 400 clients.

Achievement - [aname="OLE_LINK2">[/a][aname="OLE_LINK1">The Division served 2,402 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2010 and achieved successful employment outcomes for 279 clients. [/a]Achievement of the client served goal was driven by statewide training focusing on the proper identification of supported employment cases. Achievement of the outcomes goal was further impeded by a state unemployment rate of 9.1% in 2010 and by a lack of adequate supported employment providers in some markets.

3. Provide an Assessment of the performance of the VR program on the standards and indicators for FY 2010.

In 2010, the Division met the primary standards and indicators (1.3-1.5) as well as 1.6. The Division did not meet 1.1 or 1.2.

4. Provide a report on how the funds reserved for innovation and expansion (I&E) activities were utilized in FY 2010.

The Division reserved funds allotted to the state under Section 110 to support Innovation and Expansion (I & E) activities in Fiscal Year 2010 as follows:

The funds in 2010 were used to provide enhanced and concentrated services to

Transition School to Work students/clients.

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Attachment 6.3 Quality, Scope, and Extent of Supported Employment Services

- Describe quality, scope, and extent of supported employment services to be provided to individuals with the most significant disabilities
- Describe the timing of the transition to extended services

The Division continues to provide supported employment services to eligible clients with the most significant disabilities who have been determined to require supported employment services, in accordance with 34 CFR § 361 and 363, in order to obtain and maintain employment.

Supported employment services are funded through Title VI, Part B funds and Title I, Part B funds. Title VI, Part B funding allotment for Fiscal Year 2012 is projected to be approximately \$503,079. The Division anticipates spending in excess of 1.6 million dollars of Title I, Part B funds for supported employment services to supplement the funding received under Title VI, Part B.

It is the continued goal of the Division to provide quality supported employment services which are delivered in an effective, efficient and timely manner. Supported employment services are provided through Letters of Understanding with community rehabilitation providers and in cooperation with both the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities and the Department of Mental Health. The community rehabilitation providers must assure that on-going support services will be available prior to the provision of supported employment services.

The Division coordinates with other state agencies and the community rehabilitation providers to transition clients receiving supported employment services to extended services. The Tennessee Employment Consortium, an independent association of community rehabilitation providers developed jointly by the Division, the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities, and the Department of Mental Health, continues to study transitioning from services provided by the Division to services provided by the Department of Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities to develop best practices for transition of services.

The number of supported employment providers has decreased over the past year from 93 to 92 supported employment CRPs. While the number of CRPs remains adequate to serve the Division's decreasing number of supported employment clients, there remains a shortage of CRPs able to provide supported employment services in more rural areas of the state. The Division will continue to enter into Supported Employment agreements with appropriate state agencies, as well as private and/or non-profit agencies which have the capabilities of providing quality service delivery and on-going support services in multiple counties. The Division will assertively seek those agencies that will provide supported employment services to persons being transitioned from institutional settings to the community and to work in competitive, integrated employment settings. The Division will also be studying in-house capabilities to provide supported employment services in more rural areas of the state using Division staff and

effective methods to develop natural on-going supports.

The Division will continue to seek community rehabilitation providers to provide supported employment services to under-served disability groups with the most significant disabilities. The Division, in conjunction with the Department of Mental Health has been conducting a pilot program for transitional supported employment services for individuals with the most significant disabilities due to mental illness that began in 2008 and continues to date. Pilot programs are located in the each of the three grand Regions of Tennessee. The pilot program has been beneficial in establishing improved supported employment services for individuals with mental illness. The pilot program processes for transitional supported employment services will be incorporated into the Division's supported employment services statewide in 2012.

The Division will continue to contract for services from the University of Tennessee's Center for Literacy Studies (UT-CLS). These programs will provide continuing technical assistance and training to the Division's staff and contracted community rehabilitation providers to assure competency and compliance.

The UT-CLS program continues to conduct various studies of the components of the Supported Employment program and make recommendations for the improvements based upon these studies.

The Division expects to serve in excess of 2,700 clients through the supported employment program during the Fiscal Year 2012 and achieve successful employment outcomes for 375 clients.

An individual is moved to extended services when the client has reached a point where he/she has achieved maximum performance on the job; has achieved minimum necessary supports on the job; the job is not in jeopardy of ending; and individual is maintaining work performance which is acceptable to employer and client.

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System Information

System information

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